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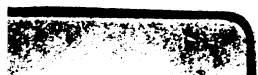
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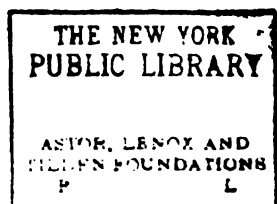
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HARRY MOWBRAY,

BY

CAPTAIN KNOX.

AUTHOR OF

"HARDNESS," "DAY DREAMS," "THE RITTMEISTER'S BUDGET,"

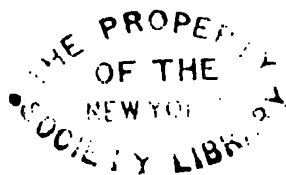
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JOHN OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.

1843.

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HARRY MOWBRAY.

CHAPTER I.

NERO fiddled while Rome was burning, at least he is said to have fiddled; and, as he has got no friends, (and never had any) any one may say what they please of him, and so he will probably have credit for having done so till doomsday. And it is a fact, that in modern times no very gigantic scene of wholesale devastation and butchery, not even a battle in China, is ever enacted without the accompaniment of military music. Nevertheless, military music is capable of better things (as the critics were so good as to say of Lord Byron) and the bugle, universally execrated at 11 A.M., when it clamoured of parade, was considered a very respectable instrument at 6½ P.M., when it sounded the last dinner horn in the Barrack Square of Ballykilldaniel, one rainy evening in the December of 1830, and the personages to whom it was addressed, the well beloved and trusty to whom his most gracious Majesty, having full confidence in their valour and discretion, had been pleased to entrust the charge of disciplining and exercising his 100th regiment of foot, understood it perfectly, and obeyed it with true military alacrity.

The veteran major, who, as the young gentlemen were accustomed figuratively to say, "drove the coach," when the colonel was away, was leaning pensively against the mantelpiece, apparently measuring with his eyes the capacity of the little anteroom for holding the twelve officers then at head-quarters, and the six guests who were to honour them with their company to dinner that day, in case the whole party should arrive before dinner was ready. The question never arose, for the dinner was announced, and the diners adjourned to the messroom, minus, of course, the greater part of the guests,—it being a remarkable feature in the history (or the perversity of the human mind, for they are pretty nearly convertible terms) of the human mind, that neither by word of mouth or by letter, by expostulation or by experience, by entreaty, by warning, or by cold soup, can it be driven into the head of a civilian that a mess sits down at the hour named, and no later;

and that a dozen hungry men will by no means wait twenty minutes for their dinner (many of them having been thinking of nothing else for the last two hours) because Ensign Higginbotham's anonymous friend, whom none of them have ever seen before, and whom few of them are likely to see again, chooses to sham fashionable in a remote village, in Munster, or Connaught. The 100th, accordingly, sat down to dinner, and a young man, apparently about twenty-two or three years of age, the wings on whose shoulders announced that the light company was his especial charge, took the chair. He was rather above the middle height, very compactly made, and evidently possessing great personal strength in a small compass; his features were regular, his complexion always dark, was still farther bronzed by exposure to an Indian sun, and a coal black, penetrating, unshrinking eye, gave a character of decision and self-reliance to a countenance which, except when he spoke, would otherwise have seemed to be saddened by an habitual expression of hopeless melancholy.

"Harry, my boy," said Major Marsden, as they sat down, "let me introduce you to Mr. MacGallagher,—Captain Mowbray,"—and Mr. MacGallagher and Captain Mowbray bowed to one another very courteously. "Many thanks for the snipe, Harry," continued the Major; "they came in capitally at breakfast."

"I brought home something more than snipe to-day, Sir," answered the Captain, with a slight, but significant smile.

"What! wild fowl?"

"No."

"A hare?"

"No."

"What then?"

"A man!"

"A what!" said Mr. MacGallagher, in a gurgling tone, through a throatful of soap.

"A man," repeated the Captain.

"You did not cut off his head, did you, as you did that Burmese scoundrel's in the jungle?" asked the Major, laughing at Mr. MacGallagher's evident mystification.

"No!" said Mowbray, with a bit of a blush, and a deprecating look: for a story went of the gallant officer, that upon his first joining the regiment, which was then engaged in operations on the banks of the Irawaddy against the Golden Feet; he being not yet sixteen years old, had strayed into the jungle, where he was attacked by a gigantic Burmese, who was prowling about, according to the custom of the country, to see whether he could not pick up a stray European head or two, in which researches after wandering English, those dingy hunters were occasionally a little too successful, and caught Tartars, as occurred in this case. It cannot be said that the Burman came for wool, and went home shorn, for he went home no more, our hero, after a short, but animated professional debate, in which the sabre proved an overmatch for spear and dagger, having probably by way of a compliment to the Burmese territory, disposed of the question upon Burmese principles, that is to say, he cut off the head of this Goliath of the jungle, and brought

it into camp; for he had observed that there was a good deal of cutting off of heads going on, and he conjectured this was the proper and correct thing to do for the satisfaction of his colonel and brother officers: and his doing so at the time will be better understood when it is remembered that a few days before, the body of an unfortunate British officer who had been made prisoner in much the same manner that our hero's liberty was attempted, had been sent down the river on a raft horribly and hideously mutilated in the usual abominable Asiatic manner. Such things make an impression on soldiers, that the loss in battle of hundreds is nothing compared to: they are duly remembered, and suitably acknowledged in due season. This ebullition of boyish triumph had been a standing joke against him ever since, but as Mr. MacGallagher did not understand the joke, though he understood the question, he fidgetted in his chair, and looked somewhat uneasily at his new friend as if he were something between a cannibal and a crocodile.

"Did you shoot him, Captain?" said he, apparently desirous of appeasing his dangerous neighbour; "I'll go bail he deserved it."

"What is the story?" asked the Major.

"I was shooting in that large bog, about eight miles off, on the road to Glenuiske."

"The bog of Carrickamore, I'll lay a shilling," interrupted Mr. MacGallagher.

"I believe that is the name," said Mowbray, "Well, I was shooting there, when I found that I was dogged by a stout countryman, in a frieze coat, who would follow me and offer to carry my bag: he *would* come so close several times, that I had to warn him to keep off."

"He wanted your gun, I'll lay a shilling," said Mr. MacGallagher.

"He did," returned the other, "and he got it, and something more that he did not bargain for. I knew precisely what he was about, and at last I got so provoked and annoyed at his persisting in following me, that I determined that if wilful *would* to water, wilful *should* drench. Hitherto I had always kept him off by keeping one barrel in reserve, but now a snipe got up, which I missed, I let the other barrel go, and before I almost knew what he was about, my friend had closed with me, and had got the gun out of my hand."

"The murdering villain!" said Mr. MacGallagher, "I'll lay a shilling he'll shoot somebody with it."

"I rather think not," said the narrator: "you never saw a man in such a state of triumph; he danced about and shouted like a savage, hugging and kissing the gun.—'You did that cleverly,' said I.—'Trust me for that,' said he. 'Ah, its mightily obliged to you I am, Captain jewel, I don't know how we poor boys would get on without the English officers; thank you kindly, Sir.'—'Well, how am I to get out of this bog?' said I.—'I'll show you the way, and welcome, Sir,' said he, and took me safe enough through the bog, until we stood at last in the road together. 'It's eight miles that way, Sir, to Ballykilldaniel, and I wish you a pleasant journey, for the other road is the way I'm going, and I'm thinkin' it would not be convanient for me to go any further with you.'—'It's only four miles to the police station,

at Newtown, I think,' said I.—'That's all, Sir,' said he, 'and by the time you get there, I'll be six miles up the mountains, and that'll be just ten miles betwixt me and the polis; that's a comfortable distance, and I'm content with it; I am an 'asy goin' man.'—'I'm glad of that,' said I, 'for I suspect you have a long journey to go.'—'Where'll that be?' said he.—'To Botany Bay,' I said—and he gave me a most triumphant wink.—'Will it, indeed? Ethen its countin' your chickens you are before they're hatched, Captain avourneen; the polisman isn't pupped that'll catch me!'—'Possibly not,' returned I, 'but in that case you must take the trouble of walking to the police station yourself.'—'Will I, by Jabers?' said he. 'Och Millia murder, what'll I do at all at all! Spare my life, Captain jewel, for the love of Heaven! Sure I was only jokin'!—It was past a joke, for the man was not four yards from me, and I had his head covered with a double-barrelled pistol, that he had by no means calculated on as forming part of my sporting equipments.'

"More power to your elbow," shouted Mr. MacGallagher, "I'd lay a shilling, Captain, you were too old a soldier to let yourself be robbed by a vagabond like that!"

"Well, he gave me no more trouble," continued the Captain; "for the click of cocking the pistol completely floored him, he cried like a child, and made no attempt at resisting, but walked very submissively along to the police-station, where I left him in charge. He seemed to me to be rather glad to get out of my clutches; for I fancy he thought my patience might not last for ever, and that I might take it into my head to shoot him. I believe it is a transportable felony."

"Well, that bates cockfighting," said Mr. MacGallagher, swallowing a glass of champagne, which he was not aware held half a pint. Dinner was now advancing rapidly towards its completion, and Mr. MacGallagher having dissolved his fear of Harry in champagne, had become very loving, and pestered him exceedingly by his pressing solicitations to come and partake of the hospitalities and other wild sports of Bally-MacGallagher Castle, which that gentleman, from having frequently passed it in his rambles, perfectly well knew was an uninhabitable house in an inaccessible bog. He promised, as an inducement, that his guest should be attended in his shooting excursions by a tenant of his own, whose personal prowess was the terror and the admiration (the first, masculine; the second, feminine) of the neighbourhood.

"It's little arms or firelocks Mick Rooney'd want," said he, "I'll bet a shilling he'd kill a man with a blow of his fist as soon as look at him."

Captain Mowbray smiled. "Where would he hit to do that?" asked he.

"Oh, that's his look out," answered the other, who was beginning to talk a very little thick.

"I have seen a man killed in that way," said Major Marsden; "and I do not think that the man that did it was a particularly strong man either; but he knew where and how to hit; to be sure the man he killed was in a state of the highest excitement, and I do not know how far that may have been the cause of death. It was a Malay running

a-muck, and he came suddenly upon an English sailor, who took it uncommonly coolly: he just stepped a little on one side, caught the Malay with a heavy left-handed lunge just under the ear, and killed him on the spot."

"I once saw an elephant kill another with a blow of its trunk," said Captain Hardcastle, a veteran officer, who had spent nearly the whole of his life in India.

"Ahem!" said the Major.

"That's right, Hardcastle," said Tom Madcap, "come it strong"

"It is a fact," persisted the Captain. "It was when we were entering the Deccan, a long time ago now. We were marching through one of those deep narrow roads they have, a thing you might call a ravine, ten miles long, so narrow that there was only room for one elephant at a time. This was a young female, and next behind her was an old male, and whether he had been teasing her, or how he provoked her I do not know: but all of a sudden she wheeled right round, up with her trunk, and gave him just one blow on the head; down he went, and we thought he was stunned, and were rather astonished at that; but when we came to examine the matter, by Jove, the poor brute was as dead as a stone."

"What a vixen!" said Mr. MacGallaher, who now began to eye everybody with a species of drunken cunning, and seemed to be getting an idea into his head that Captain Hardcastle was inclined to practise on his credulity.

"There is a particular spot in an elephant's head," continued the narrator, "where the skull does not effectually protect the brain; this is the place you always aim at when you are shooting them, and whether her instinct made her aware of this spot or that she merely hit it by accident I do not know; but she did hit it, and the brute, as I said, died instantly, and the worst was, that we had no means of moving him; he stopped up the road completely, for not an elephant would go near him; and the column was delayed under a blazing sun for seven hours; for the only way we could get rid of him was by having up the pioneers with their tools, and cutting the body into pieces."

Here Mr. MacGallaher cast a grim and ominous glance at the unconscious speaker; he seemed very much inclined to be quarrelsome, without exactly knowing how to set about it.

"You see mighty strange things in India, Sir," said he.

"Very strange indeed," said the Captain.

"Did ever you see an elephant caught in a thrap, Sir?" continued Mr. MacGallaher, waxing more wroth.

"Never," said the Captain, cracking a walnut.

"Did ever you hear tell of catching a weasel asleep?" thundered Mr. MacGallaher, and Captain Hardcastle raised his eyes from his plate to answer this unexpected question, when the surgeon of the regiment, who had also a store of Indian anecdotes, unwittingly interfered, and transferred the Milesian's wrath to himself.

"Talking of catching elephants in a trap," said he; "I have seen something much better worth seeing than that, for I once saw a tiger caught with birdlime."

"A tiger caught with birdlime!" roared out Mr. MacGallagher, completely confounded by what seemed to be the intolerable insolence of this last assertion. "Do you mane to tell me that, Sir?"

"Indeed I do," returned the doctor, "and a very curious sight it was. I would not have missed it for anything. I was on a botanical tour in the north of India, not very far from the territories of his Majesty of Oude, (May his sauce live for ever!) when the man in whose house I was lodging told me that a tiger had been tracked to his haunt, and that he was to be killed in the course of the day, after the manner of their forefathers, if I pleased to see it. Of course I did please to see it, and, accordingly, towards evening found myself, with half a dozen of the natives, perched up in a tree, which commanded a capital view of a dark out-of-the-way sort of place, where they assured me he was sure to come. I could see no preparations for taking him, but they explained to me that the ground all about was covered with leaves, the upper sides of which were smeared with birdlime, and that if he once trod on one of these leaves he was done; nothing could save him. Well, Sir, by and by down came a thumping royal tiger, swaggering along as if the whole place belonged to him; which, indeed, might have been the case, as far as nobody being inclined to dispute it with him; and sure enough he had not gone five steps before he did pick up a leaf on his fore paw. He stopped dead short, lifted up his paw and took a squint at it, as if he did not much like the look of it, and he then gave it a bit of a shake, a sort of gentle pat that would have knocked over a bullock like a nine-pin. The leaf remained, and the next thing he did was to rub it against his jaw, where it stuck. He got into a passion, but as all this time he had been picking up more leaves, the more he tried to remove them from his face the more of them stuck there. They got into his nostrils and drove him half mad; they began to get into and over his eyes, and almost blinded him, and all this time the natives about me were in a state of the highest delight, grinning and chattering like so many monkeys. All of a sudden he gave a frightful yell, and took a roll on the ground that of course covered him half over with them. He howled most hideously, and by this time he had got his eyes quite stopped with them, and after a few minutes of this sort of tarring and feathering process, he was considered to be so completely deprived of all power of self-defence that one of the natives just walked up to him and let an ounce ball into his heart as coolly as you'd shoot a jacksnipe."

Here Mr. MacGallagher's wrath exploded. He was fully convinced that both stories (both of which were strictly true) were mere inventions for the express purpose of hoaxing him.

"Do you think, Sir, that I came here to be insulted?" said he; "that I come by invitation of my friend, the Major, to dine at the mess that the officers may make game of me, and a laughing-stock of me, and an effigy of me, with these stories of boxing elephants, and tarring and feathering tigers, as if they were Christians, shooting wild bastes like cocksparrows. I'd have you to know, Sir—"

"But, my dear Sir," interrupted Harry, "nothing can be further

from the thoughts of anybody here than insulting you. These stories are nothing surprising for India."

"Then you'll allow me to tell you, Sir, that they're very amazing for Ireland."

"If the circumstance of the elephant killing the other was not remarkable," good-humouredly observed Captain Hardcastle, "what would have been the use of my telling it at all?"

"And I can assure you, Mr. MacGallaher," said the doctor, "the manner of taking a tiger that I describe is very well known to exist, though few have had the opportunity of being eye-witnesses of it as I had, simply because it is confined to a part of India where few Europeans penetrate; and, as Hardcastle justly observes, if the story was one of everyday life, what would be the use of telling it?"

"Well, that's true," said Mr. MacGallaher, as suddenly appeased as he was irritated. "I beg your pardon, Sir; but sometimes I'm rather hard of believing. Shake hands, doctor; shake hands, captain; tip us your fin, major, ould boy. I'd go bail you'd shoot a tiger as soon as look at him; did you ever (hiccup) ate one, doctor? That was an elegant story of yours; I'll tell you a story myself, how Mick Rooney took a mad bull by the horns, that'll make you die of laughing."

It takes a tolerably clear head to tell a story well out of hand, and Mr. MacGallaher's head being what he would have called mighty confubtrificated at the moment, and the course of the narration being seriously impeded by hiccups, repetitions, glasses of claret, and expressions of amity towards the gentlemen whose throats he had proposed cutting, and all the other elephants and tigers in the tropics, occupied about forty minutes, in the course of which Harry Mowbray contrived to effect his escape. Having reached his own room, and locked the door—a necessary precaution in barracks—Henry for some time paced slowly backwards and forwards. The pistols that had done him such good service in the morning, lay on the table, still loaded, and from time to time he cast a moody glance at them, as if he almost felt inclined to turn them against himself.

"It is a hard necessity," muttered he, "to live to suffer. Is it a necessity to live at all? If I had a father or a mother, a brother or a sister, a wife—ah! there it is—any one depending upon me; but my life is my own. What is life?—I have killed men with my own hand in action, whose very face I hardly saw whilst I struck at them—I have directed fire that I knew must kill men; and the sun shone, and the wind blew, and the rain fell, all the same. Why, bishops and parsons cannot think it very wrong, after all; for the first thing they teach a boy is, to admire Cato, Hannibal, Lycurgus, Brutus, Themistocles; and a score more illustrious names are held up for our admiration by Christian churchmen. Cicero dared not, nor Seneca, till he could not help himself; and nobody thinks better of them for it. But why I, who have neither fear of death nor love of life, should hesitate—" He took up the pistol.

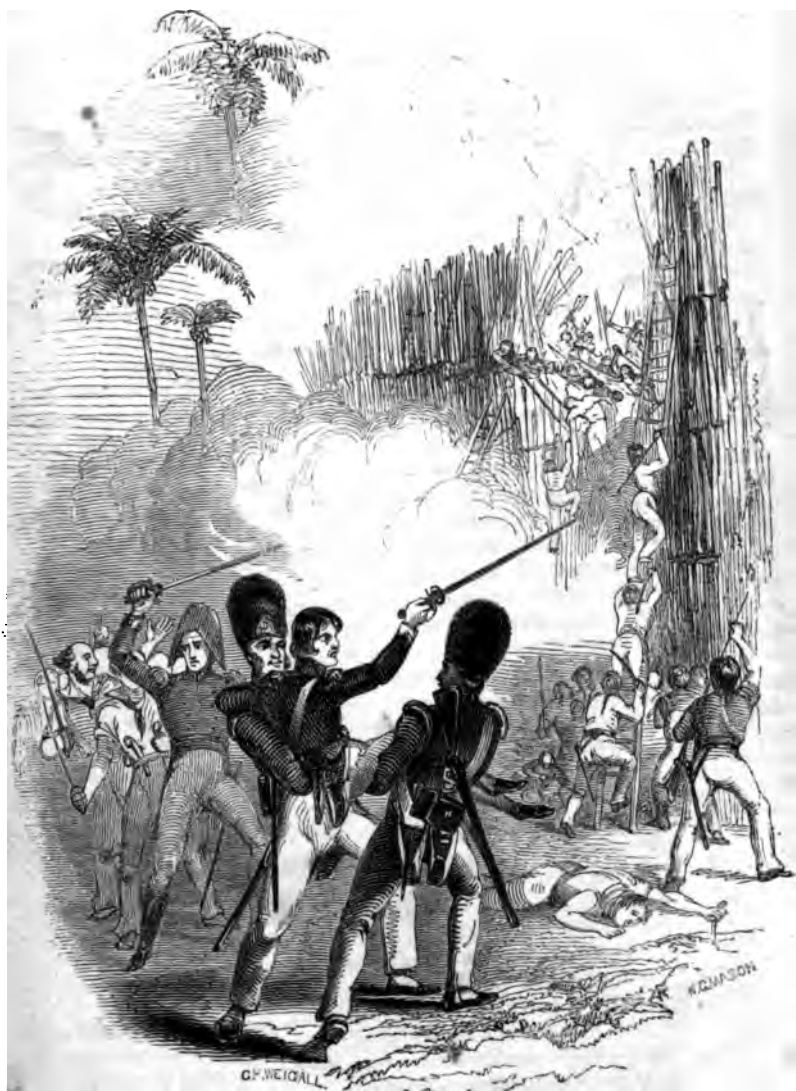
It has been said that, when the weariness of life creeps over the soul, there are only two feelings strong enough to resist and reattach

the sickened affections to the earth, and those two are Love and Religion. Alas ! it was Henry's imperfect notions of Religion that were the immediate causes of his disappointed love ; but another feeling was at work in his breast. It was the weakness of pride that guided the hand of Cato : the strength of pride arrested that of Henry. " All this for a silly girl, who is frightened at independence of mind. I shall pay her no such compliment," said he, as he drew the charges.

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CHAPTER II.

MR. MACGALLAHER was, by this time, very drunk indeed; and Major Marsden and Captain Hardcastle, not paying much attention to Mick Rooney's tauromachia, were talking of Harry Mowbray.

"Poor fellow," said Marsden, "I cannot think what is the matter with him; he is not the man he used to be."

"He seems to have come across something he did not like when he was last on leave," said Hardcastle; "I cannot imagine what it is."

"It is a great pity—so fine a fellow as he was. I almost suspect there is a lady in the case."

"I do not consider that captains of infantry are subject to that disorder," returned Hardcastle, "except in the milder form, that is denominated 'spooning,' and cured by the first turnpike. I consider that a 'route' cancels love, as well as leave."

"I remember as well as yesterday," said the Major, "Mowbray's joining, and a monstrous fine boy he was. He was not above sixteen, I think; and he had not been three days with us before he had an opportunity of smelling powder. We were in boats on the Irawaddy, and were ordered to land and destroy a stockade that seemed likely to become troublesome. Well, we landed, and just as we had shook the stockade a bit with some carronades the boats carried, and were making a dash at it with the bayonet, down went poor Harry. He was shot through the thigh; but, by Jove! he would not give in: he insisted on being carried on, and accordingly a couple of grenadiers slung their firelocks, and made what children call a sedan chair, or a dandy chair, with their hands, and on they went with the stormers, Harry cheering as if the whole British army was at his back. It was a smartish job: the Burmese fought it out well. A good many of them—a sort of 'corps d'elite'—that were called the immortals, were firmly convinced that they were invulnerable, and that we could not kill them; and to drive this idea out of their heads we generally had to knock their brains out, and they were quite up to showing us that two could play at that sort of thing. We lost some men at the stockade, for they stood out longer than I ever saw any other troops do; and in the middle of the row, amidst the roar of artillery, the clatter of musketry, the cheers of the soldiers, the yells of the savages, the crashing of bamboos and the clashing of steel—drums, shouts, groans, bugles, and all the other sounds of battle, I could hardly help laughing at hearing one of his bearers, a brawny Tipperary boy, with a Badajos wound in his cheek, and a Waterloo medal on his breast, consoling Harry, in his peculiar way.

"Never mind, Sir; we'll soon pay off them bloody niggers the little touch they gave you. We'll make them lave that with a thunderin' big flea in their ears. There isn't the throops in the world, wild or

tame, will stand up agin our boys. First and foremost, they're a grate dale braver; more, by token, when it comes to a tussle, they're a grate deal stronger, and there's only one endin', that I know of, to that sort of thing."

"I'll lay a shilling it was an Irishman said that," hiccuped Mr. MacGallaher.

"It was," said the Major, "a Tipperary boy."

"Shure I knew that," said Mr. MacGallaher.

"Well, and what happened," asked Hardcastle; "it was before I came to the regiment."

"Oh! the man was right," said the Major; "the attack had the usual ending; and a good many of the defenders met the end common upon those occasions. We burned the stockade, and took an umbrella, which, I believe, is Burmese for a regimental colour; and, you may suppose, young Mowbray reaped a full harvest of the admiration with which old soldiers always look upon pluck and spirit in a boy."

"I'm glad to hear you say so, Sir," said Mr. MacGallaher, as well as he could; "for I'm to have the pleasure of meeting him at Lord Ellesmere's to-morrow."

"Oh!—you are going there, are you?" said the Major. "Harry spends the week there."

"So do I," said Mr. MacGallaher; "and a mighty pleasant house it is—liberty hall, every brick of it; and the marquis has got a bottle or two of claret in the cellar; and that I may be sure to get there to-morrow, I'm thinking that it's time for me to be off to-night;" and taking a friendly leave of all, especially the two story-tellers, he astonished the mess extremely by walking out of the room, though he could hardly speak plain, as coolly and steadily as if he had drank nothing, instead of the greater part of a bottle of sherry, ditto champagne, ditto port, and a couple of bottles of claret.

"It is my opinion," said Madcap, casting a disappointed glance after the vanishing figure, "that we ought to have had that fellow's whiskers off."

The next morning, on his road to Lord Ellesmere's castle of Avonmore, Harry was to meet the family at a steeple chase that took place in the neighbourhood. The only member of it he was acquainted with was Lord William Fitzwarine, a young man of about his own age, who, on his arrival at the course, presented him to his mother and sisters—the ladies Madeline and Sarah, who were already there, waiting for the event of the day, which was a match as follows:—

Mr. O'Shaughlin's bay horse, DANIEL, three years old, 11 st. 7 lb.

Mr. Manningham's grey mare, ADELAIDE, five years old, 12 st. 4 lb.

Mr. O'Shaughlin was of true Milesian stock, and of the ancient faith, and consequently a favourite with the people, many of whom, not without some reason, considered that circumstance an abundantly sufficient reason for betting on his horse, notwithstanding his being two years younger than his opponent, whose owner, Mr. Manningham, a member of the established church, was a new man in the eyes of the peasantry, and, what was worse, an intruder: his ancestor having come in with Cromwell. Both horses were equally unknown, the three years

old not having had time to distinguish himself particularly, and the other having come from another country; nor did the course seem to give any particular advantage to either, it being, in fact, a track marked by flags, and equitably conducted through stony upland, new plough, grass, and bog; the tedious uniformity of what is termed a "flat race" in Ireland, being agreeably diversified by certain double banks, dry ditches, stone walls, and hurdles, which with a wet ditch, dammed up so as to make a considerable jump, and a down leap into a gravel pit, gave as reasonable promise as could be expected of first-rate sport and broken collar-bones; so that the course did not seem to favour either horse, unless, perhaps, its severity might tell against the young one; and the Avonmore party, whom Harry had now joined, appeared to make their bets very much according to their own fancy, without much reference to the powers of the two animals, and still less to the particular quality which was really to decide the race, viz. the conscience of the horse.

A hill, which commanded a view of the whole of the running, was crowded with all sorts of people, in all manner of equipages or vehicles, as their owners were accustomed to call them—many of them having no definite name, from the primitive grandmother of all the jaunting cars, viz. a common country car, with a feather bed in it, and a sort of shelf hanging from it, for the feet to rest upon, up to the aristocratic barouche and four, that conveyed the Marchioness of Ellesmere. There were also a considerable number of young ladies upon a curious rough sort of animal, with indifferent eyes and ragged fetlocks, just large enough to be above ponyhood, and, accordingly, dignified with the title of a horse. Many of these damsels, in default of a regular habit, completed their equestrian costume by means of cloaks, tartan or woollen indifferently as the case might be, fastened round their waists. Some wore bonnets, and some foraging caps, whose black oil-skin covers looked amazingly as if they covered the bright scarlet bands and golden cypher of the 100th Regiment of Foot, borrowed for the occasion. Of women of the lower classes there was not, perhaps, the same proportion as there would have been in an English race-course; but the men were to be counted by tens of thousands.

The gentlemen were trying to ascertain whether anybody knew anything about either of the horses, which nobody did; the jontlemen were trying to look as if they considered themselves equal to anybody in the world, and rather superior to most, and, fully convinced of the justice of that opinion, did not care who knew they held it. The shopkeepers were trying to look above the shop, with their customary success; and as to the honest peasantry, with their frieze coats and unbuttoned knees, wicked-looking blackthorns and merry-looking black eyes, who cared not three-farthings to be thought anything else than what they were—a light-hearted, light-headed, good-humoured, careless, thoughtless, rattling race of beings as any the sun shines on,—they were thinking of the race, and the fun, and the whisky, and, maybe, a bit of a scrimmage, and were in the seventh heaven.

"Are you ready?"

"Faith we are."

"Then go ; and devil take the hindmost."

And away they went, as if they gave the starter credit for possessing the gift of prophecy. The first mile they ran amicably together: the pace was tolerably good, but the ground was light, the fencing easy, and nothing particular occurred to bring out or throw back either horse ; but it was remarkable that the crowd, who utterly unmoved saw them take a bank at least eight feet high, became in the highest degree excited when they approached the water—a species of leap which the peasantry of that county, being little accustomed to brook-jumping, regard with almost a superstitious awe. The grey, who had seen something of the sort before in the Ashbourne country came steadily up, and took it in an easy, business-like manner in her stride. The young one floundered a bit coming up, but ultimately gathering himself up, apparently in desperation, cleared it and about ten feet more, to the intense delight of the country people, whose shouts might now be heard for miles round ; but here a bit of stiff plough began to try their mettle. The grey got into a long hunting gallop, and was evidently creeping over the heavy ground with the least possible exertion to herself ; whilst the bay was in trouble, going wild, and looking very much inclined to bolt. They were now approaching a stiff and ugly double bank (or ditch, as that fence is called in the county), round which was assembled an enormous mob. Just at this moment Harry felt his knee touched by a man, who had been standing some time by his side, and in whom he now recognized a person who had occasionally supplied some of his brother officers, whose tastes lay in that direction, with poteen.

"Lay on the bay, Captain," said the man, with a peculiarly knowing look.

"Why," returned Harry, "the bay's done ; she'll never get out of that field."

"Never mind, Captain," said the man ; "make haste. Lay on the bay ; bet his lordship there a ten-pound note. You'll get *ped*, you know," with a peculiar wink, which seemed to imply that winning a bet and being paid were not always synonymous in the neighbourhood of Ballymacdaniel. "Ah! now, lay on the bay ; make haste, Captain, or you'll be too late."

Harry could not precisely make out why he should back the bay at a time that the grey looked uncommonly like a winner, but the next moment explained it. The grey, leading by twenty lengths, and evidently winning easy, came up to the leap, and was instantly assailed with a volley of turf, hats, sods, and sticks, although (with a considerate and sportsman-like regard for the safety of the *horse*—in which that of the rider had no part) not a single stone was thrown. The poor animal, staggered by this reception, accompanied, as it was, by shouts, hootings, and gesticulations, that would have done honour to a flock of mad derbies, faltered, refused, and finally turned back. The bay came up, took the fence unimpeded, and passed on under thundering shouts, that seemed to frighten him out of his senses. The grey now came up again, with the same reception, and the same results ; and the third time—

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the other being now close to the winning-post, she was suffered to pass; and a universal cheer announced that Mr. O'Shaughlin had won.

"Arrah, Captain," said Harry's smuggling friend, "see now, why didn't you lay on the bay when I tould you, you'd have won the ten pound note, that would have been ped as sure as eggs are eggs, sure you didn't think the Ballymacdaniel boys would let a *protestant* horse win. That *would* be a hard case."

At this moment, whilst Harry was meditating on this singular exhibition of steeple chace polemics that the first flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea alone could have afforded; the race-course became suddenly a scene of indescribable confusion. Mr. Manningham, Cromwellian as he was, was a good landlord; this energetic display of zeal it is to be remarked, took place in 1830, before the 'Patriots' had succeeded in estranging the peasantry from their best friends and natural protectors as completely as they have done now, and a considerable number of his tenantry were on the ground, who had by no means been aware of the emphatic means that were to be employed to vouch the attachment of the country people to the creed of their forefathers, and who, though they might have agreed in the principle of the measure, objected entirely to being included in the capacity of losers, in its details. These men forthwith commenced a desperate attack upon the defenders of the faith, who received it nothing loth, and the affair was still more complicated by the interference of some of the police, in a body quite sufficient to irritate the fighters, without being strong enough to put a stop to the fight. The combatants, however, consoled themselves with the reflection, that though they might possibly among themselves occasionally mistake a friend for a foe, there could be no harm in giving a policeman a rap on the head in any case, and acting on this view, were soon left to settle the matter among themselves, and finally the tide of war surged up the hill where there were several magistrates assembled to see the sport, whom it pleased the people forthwith to constitute and appoint a special commission, to hear and determine the causes arising out of it, in the open air on a hill side, after the manner in which the Brehon laws were administered to their ancestors.

As they came up the hill, squabbling and fighting, and wrestling, and shouting, one of them, an Avonmore tenant, caught a glimpse of Lord William, and extricating himself from the crowd, made a dash at his horse's head for protection. The animal startled at the suddenness of the action, reared, the crowd directly made a rush after the fugitive, Lord William's horse reared again, and falling over, fell heavily upon his unfortunate rider, who was taken up senseless, and though soon restored to animation by the lancet, was unable to mount again, and was obliged to be conveyed home in the carriage.

CHAPTER III.

THE castle of Falconsrag, the inheritance of Harry Mowbray, was a monument of the wisdom of our ancestors, though the wisdom was rather that which belongs to the serpent than to the dove ; it was a standing (and not unfrequently a tumbling) reminiscence of the good old times, having been originally very carefully, and indeed successfully, constructed for and on

“ The simple plan
That those should take who have the power,
And those should keep who can ;”

and it did its designer great credit. The “ simple plan,” however, is, as far as concerns these islands of the west, out of date. It was little better than a stunted shrub here, so we have transplanted it to the east, where under the fostering influence of an oriental sun it has grown up into a gigantic tree, that shadows whole nations, and shelters innumerable beasts of prey. The castle itself gradually fell into decay with the system that gave it birth, and in the early part of the present century, might be likened to a colossal fossilized hen and chickens. It consisted of one large tower, the ancient keep, which was still tolerably perfect, with a large ‘ block ’ of dwelling house attached to it, and a variety of straggling out-buildings lying round it, most of whom had suffered some degradation from the rank they originally filled. On one side an uninhabited house had been converted into a barn, the floors and rafters having taken their flight to heaven on the wing of a fiery dragon, for fuel was sometimes scarce in calm weather ; on another, a range of offices had been reduced into a rambling sort of a stable, whilst the original stable, whose occupation was thus gone, had become a tabernacle for the unclean beast ; and the dilapidated pigsty, it had thus thrown out of employment, overrun now by mice and rats and such small deer, afforded sustenance and exercise to the venerable inhabitants of a large ruinous watch-tower, on the east side of the castle, which the progress of time and ivy had converted into an aviary, for it was full of owls.

A house, such as it was, certainly, as we have already said, existed, but the greater part of the roof was gone, the laws of gravity in the long run having vanquished the laws of attraction as embodied in the rotten pegs that pinned the broken slates to the decayed rafters, the sashless windows admitted the rain and the wind, and whatever else chose to enter by them, the surviving doors were so many pneumatic valves, opening and shutting according to the pressure of the atmosphere, and obeying no other laws whatever ; the cellars, whose days of jollity were over, yawned in all directions, as if they were really tired of waiting for the tottering fabric above that seemed ready to tumble into their jaws. In short, it was a house, less everything that constitutes a house, or at all events distinguishes a house from a stone

enclosure covered in. It was then a mere shell, and as is customary in such cases, had known better days, and what is not always customary, had known worse days too.

The history of the castle (in a chronological and archæological point of view) from the time of King John, would suit the pages of the Gentleman's Magazine admirably, but would probably be considered out of place here, so we will content ourselves with a philosophical view of it; that is to say, a slight sketch of its purpose, use, abuse, and disuse.

The castle then was built upon a promontory, not far from the village of Somerton, forming a sort of hump-backed peninsula, which standing out in bold relief from the main land, commanded a view of several miles of particularly dangerous coast on each side, terminating both on the right and left hand, with as ugly a headland as ever reared its black boding form before embayed vessel.

This choice of a situation was by no means dictated by motives that would have found favour in the eyes of the Trinity House, being in fact, for the purpose of acquiring the earliest knowledge, as an old servant of the house, who had studied theology in the time of the Commonwealth, once said, of whatever wrecks the mercy of Providence might throw upon that poor but industrious coast.

To the mercy of Providence upon such occasions, the poor but industrious inhabitants were accustomed to leave the shipwrecked seamen, and it was all they had to trust to, for from their fellow creatures they received neither mercy nor pity. Justice of course was out of season in the equinoctial gales. With the "wreckers" there was but one law, and that was, first come first served, and though amongst them there had been handed down from earlier ages, a sort of tradition or superstition that anything coming ashore from the wreck alive, if it were only a dog, in some degree invalidated their title to the plunder, as a free gift from heaven direct, still they had a mode of settling that question whenever it arose, in a manner whose simplicity was the very reverse of beautiful, and many a wretched mariner, battling for his life with the wind and the waves, clinging to a plank, a spar, a fragment of the wreck, that had borne him in triumph and safety but yesterday,—chilled, bruised, exhausted, and all but powerless, has reached the shores of christian England, there to be murdered by Englishmen.

Under these walls did such scenes pass, though in them the family of Mowbray, who were the owners of the castle, had no part, personally at least; for from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century they had resided at Mowbray Court, their princely residence, farther inland. Nor was the plunder of wrecks the only irregularity of which the castle was guilty in earlier days. In the heart of the rock upon which it stood was a gigantic cave, which could only be entered in a boat, and which had formerly been the storehouse and refuge of smugglers, at a time when the smuggler was little better than a pirate, and not unfrequently engaged in much more serious enterprises against the Government than the evasion of customs' duties. Indeed the castle was not without its own tales of adventure and concealment, one of which effec-

tually blasted what little remains of character it still preserved in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

A well-known partisan of the exiled family, a Jesuit moreover, after evading one of the hottest pursuits that even that age of manhunting afforded, reached the castle in the dusk of the evening, with his pursuers close upon his traces. He was seen to enter it, the horse he rode was found saddled and bridled as just dismounted in the court; the old fisherman who then occupied it admitted that a stranger had ridden in, and without any appearance of doubt or hesitation had entered the main building, where he presumed he was then. The castle was immediately placed under such watch as was practicable, that is, the land side was strictly guarded; boats rowed round it day and night, and the strictest search was made, but with no effect. Those who searched the house from the land could give no account of the fugitive; he had vanished, they could not find the slightest trace of him: those who searched the cave from the sea could give no account of him, or indeed of themselves either, for they came out exceedingly drunk, having lit on a depot of cognac; and finally, it was concluded that he must have perished in some hole or corner of the old building of cold and hunger, and it consequently became a canon in the neighbourhood that his ghost haunted the castle, an idea clamorously and incessantly maintained and confirmed by the nocturnal chorus of owls.

The boldest ghost-layer dared not enter into a single combat with the ghost of a priest, and of a Jesuit into the bargain, the toughest and cunningest of all priests; the water cure, common on such occasions, the Red Sea, was not available here, and so strongly did this idea hold its ground in the country, that when, nearly a century afterwards, the then Mr. Mowbray, the last Mr. Mowbray of Mowbray Court, yielding at length to the declining fortunes of his family, took refuge in Falconsrag, he had at first some difficulty in persuading servants to live in the ghostly stronghold.

Upon his arrival Mr. Mowbray's first care was to put the castle into something like habitable order, in which he was assisted by the plenty of timber, stone, and slate on the spot; for a considerable portion of the dilapidated part of it was immediately pulled down, partly to assist in the reconstruction of the rest, and partly to fill up divers inequalities upon a terrace, which being tolerably sheltered, made something like level, and covered about six inches deep with soil, he christened his garden, on the strength of some sea pinks, flags,—debateable plants which he called “flowers of ocean,” and his detractors “marine weeds.” He lived, however, to see it dignified with roses, gooseberries, and other indisputable land plants.

This step of coming to reside at Falconsrag was not a sudden, still less a voluntary step. The family of Mowbray, of Mowbray Court, was a very ancient and powerful one. Dating their descent from the Conquest, they had at one time possessed the country round for miles and miles, and the particular branch of which this Mr. Mowbray, the father of our hero, was the head, was generally supposed, and probably with justice, to represent the ancient earldom of Falcontower, which, now extinct, dormant, suspended, or in abeyance, as the case might be, had

formerly been enjoyed by the family. At present, however, since they had exchanged the glories of Mowbray Court for the grim seclusion of Falconsrag, nobody in the neighbourhood troubled themselves more about that subject, nor indeed did the representative of the title bestir himself in the matter. The dormant earldom might have prolonged its nap till doomsday for any steps he would take to bring it to life and light. He very well knew that a golden pickaxe is required to disinter a buried title, and the pecuniary misfortunes of the Mowbrays had begun some ages ago, and were hardly ended then. *Tempus edax rerum* had nibbled at their estate in each successive period according to the fashion of the times. The crusades had made the first onslaught in the name of religion, and then came civil war, sometimes in the name of monarchy and sometimes in the name of liberty, but in all cases leaving whatever it touched a good deal the worse for wear and tear. Then, as civilization advanced, came an occasional forfeiture, an occasional bribe to a favourite, something that Cromwell called "Composition," but which might with much greater propriety have been called decomposition, for the estate was never whole and sound after it. Then came some money lent to Charles II., an occasional spendthrift, an occasional confidential steward, a good many patriotic appeals to the free and independent electors for — shire, a character for hospitality, a taste for building and gambling, and finally, a Chancery suit, This laid on the last pound, and the camel's back broke.

The ruin which Mr. Mowbray had refused to look on till it took the matter into its own hands and stared him in the face, now compelled him to examine the state of affairs, when finding that the remaining property of the family, being a nominal rental of about £10,000 a year, was subject to charges exceeding £9,000, he judged that it would be best to abandon a position that he could not maintain, and as in 1815 English rents and French privateers seemed on the point of disappearing together, he resolved upon retaining the wild and secluded estate of Falconsrag on the coast, and having sold all the rest for a sum that left little after paying the incumbrances, the sun of the Mowbrays seemed to set for ever.

Mr. Mowbray, no longer Mowbray of Mowbray Court, gloomy and discontented, had possessed sufficient strength of mind to do battle manfully with his fallen fortunes, and to adopt resolutely those measures that necessity pointed out to him; but the excitement of the sacrifice once over, he wanted the resignation of disposition to enable him to bear up under the inevitable decadence from the station so long held by his ancestors, and from that time forwards he mixed no more with the world, but confining himself almost entirely to the ground that was yet his, abandoned himself to morbid, and as may be supposed very unprofitable meditations. The principal tower he took possession of, and fitted up for his own especial residence, in a style of gloomy simplicity that accorded with the character of his thoughts at the time. A quantity of old oak wainscotting, that was scattered in different directions through the other neglected buildings, was collected here, and covered the walls of the dining-room, library, bed-room, and dressing-room, which he constructed in the ancient tower; ponderous oak

chairs offered repose to all comers of all weights, antique sofas whose backs were ball proof, in short, everywhere a profusion of heavy carved wood gave an air of antiquity, melancholy under the circumstances to those apartments. The remainder of the house was fitted up substantially and plainly, but in a more modern taste, and differed little from any other country residence, excepting in this much, that everywhere, whether in chamber, hall, staircase, lobby, or passage, the walls were peopled with family portraits, which, dating as many of them did from the fourteenth century, maintained unblemished the character for superhuman ugliness common to such ancestral apparitions.

Here Mr. Mowbray spent the remainder of his days ; and, as he had expressly selected this estate, of a rental of seven or eight hundred a year, from the rest, on the ground that it was remarkable for the least possible amount of produce from the greatest possible extent of surface, it was, of course, extensive in proportion to its barrenness ; so that he could yet enjoy his afternoon's ride without stirring off his own land, in which, besides a few turnips and a patch or two of oats, he could still find some sources of interest. There was at one point a red rivulet, with a prismatic tinted scum upon it, and a heavy crop of toadstools on the bank, and nature had painted this stream in such bright colours, that the imagination was not called on to add *very* much more to convert it (it being his *own* property, it is to be understood) into an infallible indication of an extensive and valuable deposit of ironstone, for the convenience of working which, he transmuted a good sized hill in the neighbourhood, into coal. The black slaty stone of which the hill was composed, certainly, in many respects, did resemble coal—it looked like coal, and felt like coal—its specific gravity was the same, nor did its taste or smell differ much, but there was one material distinction, viz., that coal burns, and this did not.

There were also on the estate some hundreds of acres that would grow absolutely nothing above three-eighths of an inch high, upon any condition whatever, being, in fact, a fine macadam of nature's own pulverization ; and Mr. Mowbray, in consequence, used to take great pleasure in calculating how many millions of larch some former Duke of Athol, formerly planted upon some miles of hereditary hills in the north, and how many line of battle ships might be constructed out of them ; calculations which will probably afford some of his grace's successors more substantial gratification than they did Mr. Mowbray, who postponed commencing *his* planting until the great and grim lord of the soil, who finally plants all, Death, settled the matter and the man, root and branch, in his own peculiar way. He also indulged in some airy visions of a glass manufactory, based on the undeniable facts that there was plenty of sand on the shore, and plenty of salt in the sea. The facts were so, but the logic was unequal to the construction of a glass-house. In short, there was no end to Mr. Mowbray's plans for resuscitating the family's prosperity, and luckily for our friend Harry, there was no beginning to them either : it would have been the old story, throwing good money after bad.

Upon these paternal hallucinations, young Harry looked with an eye of filial respect. Not that he had been taught to honour his father and

er, for *she* had died before he was three years old, and the Mowbray's ideas of education did not lie much in that way, was wanted in training, came by nature; at ten years generally bore a stronger resemblance to a red Indian, than a Briton, in consequence of his incessant researches into the led rivulet above-mentioned; at twelve he was a Scandigon of the ocean, a Norwegian sea-king, much addicted to berserkery, as those high-handed pirates are described by those times, on the strength of the shingly acres, the forests hereon, and the ships to be built therefrom; at fourteen he sed Clara Hastings, (of whom more anon) a looking-glass as self, and a great deal taller, a draught at sight upon the e, on the sand; and, at sixteen, had come to the conclusion father must have some amusement and some occupation, those followed were quite as agreeable as, and a great deal more than, those wherewith the present owner of Mowbray Court, onveyancer, disported his leisure moments, golden-loaded as viz. by carrying scandal and toadying noblemen.

nately, however, all Mr. Mowbray's speculations were not so The construction of glass-houses on the sand, of seedling l soilless forests, of founderies without iron, and furnaces al, does no mischief, and even in some cases does good; for ibted that many a castle in the air ultimately turns out to be g event of the castle on the earth casting its shadow before. its, the castle in the air is an agreeable residence, subject smoky chimnies, damp, infection, rates or taxes, but it is her matter when men take to constructing temples in the d this was an occupation of Mr. Mowbray's. Born in the year entered into life just at the moment when men's minds were with the downfall of old systems, and the removal of old red institutions were overthrown, and old opinions overborne, xperience pushed recklessly aside by the presumption of authority of religion scoffed at by a senseless infidelity that en merited the name of scepticism: in short, his character isfortune to be formed at that feverish period, when all the d unsettlement of opinion that even now has hardly subsided was beginning to disturb men's minds with they knew not en revolution was in enthusiastic men's eyes like an opera fresh and young, fair and smiling, and some thought guilt- uileless. The cup she offered was gemmed and sparkling; re innocent blood that lurked in the dregs, and many quaffed d unthinkingly the unknown draught, whose intoxication was id so hideously to madden into murder.

number was the elder Mr. Mowbray, who in his hot youth pouised the jacobite party. maintained that all men were born ch Gallicism being rendered into English, signifies that one's are to come down to one's level, and one's inferiors are to they are, and being rendered into American, signifies that has a right to "Whop his own Nigger." That the people ource of all legitimate power, meaning by the word people,

that portion of the mass that remains after excluding all noblemen, clergymen, lawyers, officers, landed proprietors, and gentlemen in general, women, children, soldiers, sailors, fundholders, minors, and a few more classes ; that the duties upon malt, hops, wine, and spirits, ought to be abolished, on the ground that the duty of the Government was to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number ; that the greatest happiness for the greatest number was to be exceedingly drunk ; that the most unbearable tyranny in any Government was that which interfered with the consciences of the people ; and that consequently the Government had nothing to say to the morality of the matter, and nothing to do but to provide that the people should get drunk to their heart's content, more especially when called upon to elect law-makers ; that an established church was a colossal nightmare in petticoats, that ancient customs were hoary villains, that the rights of property were mere parchment phantasmata, without the might to enforce them, which he maintained resided actually in the many, and should, consequently, be formally restored them by some process of agrarian law, which he did not generally very clearly explain, for the same reason, that nobody actually knows what Chartism actually is, viz. because the Chartists do not know themselves, and cannot, therefore, expound their views any more than Mr. Mowbray could tell what he wanted ; but, nevertheless, he called himself a patriot, and was accustomed to boast that he moved steadily in the footsteps of Fox, whilst, in fact, he was treading on the heels of Tom Paine.

CHAPTER IV.

It is true that Mr. Mowbray's opinions moderated when the young tiger showed his claws and fangs, and, as usual, he made a step for the time somewhat in advance of the opposite party. He became convinced that there must be some institutions to steady the country, especially heavy cavalry; that there must be some influence, moral or physical, capable of keeping the mob in order, particularly round shot, (an idea that the child of the revolution and champion of liberty, Napoleon, also adopted, subsequently with the addition and improvement of grape and cannister); and when the monster had gorged itself upon royal blood, he began to see the beauties of monarchy. Still it is difficult to touch pitch without being defiled; the state of public feeling at the time unsettled, yet evolving no truth; sceptical, yet inconclusive, lax in morality, empirical in politics, and entangled in religion, exercised to his latest day a most unfortunate influence over his mind, owing to the incapacity of forming a distinct opinion which it generated, an influence whence his son did not wholly escape, and which had bitter fruits in store for him. What Mr. Mowbray's religion was, it would be difficult to say; he said it was the religion of nature, which was a good round comprehensive term, and would have done for any system, or all systems together, or for any combination of systems, or for no system whatever.

The process by which he arrived at it was, by taking what he called a philosophical, unprejudiced, and unshackled view of the subject; that is to say, he disbelieved all revelation, rejected all reason, discarded all assistance, and made a guess in the dark, whence the reader may very clearly perceive that it was next to impossible to state what his religion really was; but, unhappily, it was very easy to say what it was not—it was not Christianity. He had a sort of general glimmering idea that there was a Supreme Being, probably incomprehensible, which, in his opinion, absolved him from the necessity of taking any particular trouble to understand Him. His idea of the relation between a present and a future state, were embodied in a distich he had learned from his nurse to this effect:—

We come into the world naked and bare,
We go out of it, no one knows where;
But if we do well here, we shall be well there.

Lines which he repeated frequently, and held of at least equal value with those most philanthropic, universally necessary, and universally appealed to verses, which he learned at the same time:—

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November,
February hath twenty-eight alone,
And all the rest have thirty-one;
Except in leap-year, then's the time,
February hath TWENTY-NINE.

Some sort of religion he thought a good thing, and was accustomed in his arguments on the subject, to admit, with a great air of candour, that there ought to be something of the kind to preserve the peace of the world ; a species of preventive police, whose constables, nevertheless, especially the superintendants or *episcopoi*, he considered a good deal too lightly worked, and a great deal too highly paid : and here again his nursery rhymes stood him in good stead, for having a very high opinion of the philosophy of example, his opinion of the grounds upon which nations adopted certain forms of worship, was embodied in the familiar lines,

Jack and Jill
Went up the hill,
To fetch a pail of water ;
Jack fell down,
And broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

The Church of England he considered a very good, quiet, ladylike church, suitable to country squires' families, inclined to indulge in no eccentricities, and not addicted to poaching.

That of Scotland, though somewhat headstrong and skittish, like one of her own mountain ponies, and rather inclined to fling her heels into the face of the state, he considered suited to weavers. The very mention of Presbyterianism conveyed to his mind an impression of drugged ; it seemed in its place among peats and heather, thistles and waterfalls, but he could not imagine it among daisies and buttercups ; besides, it did not seem to perform the only service he considered a church capable of rendering, viz. keeping people in good humour.

The Roman Catholic faith he considered the most gentleman-like, and the Mohametan the most soldier-like. The creed of China was, in his eyes, a most admirable, safe, and efficacious antibilious family medicine ; but all and several, he conceived, had borrowed largely from the ancient Egyptians and Chaldees, and, as is commonly the case with borrowers, were not much richer for the accommodation afforded, which, in his opinion, was little better than mysticism.

Holding such views, it is not a little remarkable that Mr. Mowbray went out of the world in the full conviction that he was summoned from it by an apparition ; and, what was more, predicted the hour of his death on the strength of that apparition, and predicted it accurately. The Sunday before his death, which occurred in the year 1826, he had attended, as he sometimes did, divine service in the parish church ; not absolutely to scoff, still less to pray, but, as he said, by way of example to his tenants. The clergyman of the parish observed that Mr. Mowbray had listened to his discourse with more attention than he was generally accustomed to bestow upon such matters, and hoping that even then—at the eleventh hour—some impression might be made upon the heart so long hardened against all his persuasions, he walked with him towards Falconscrag. Mr. Mowbray complained of being unwell, of headache, and chilliness in the hands and feet ; but nothing particular passed between them, and at the castle they parted. When, however, the clergyman came out from evening service, he found a messenger waiting for him at the church door, with a

request from Mr. Mowbray that he would repair to Falconsrag directly. The result may be best gathered from the memorandum which he drew up for the only son, our friend Harry, who was then in India:—

THE REVEREND WILLIAM MARSDEN'S NARRATIVE.

“Upon entering the room which Mr. Mowbray commonly occupied at Falconsrag, I found him, notwithstanding that it was in the middle of summer, seated over a huge fire, and still complaining of cold. Dr. Johnson had prescribed for him, and had just left him; and, in addition to the expression of great uneasiness in his countenance, there was an air of mystery to which I was unaccustomed. He immediately entered on the subject that evidently had possession of his imagination.

“‘Probably you are not as yet aware,’ said he, ‘that in this castle there has been, for nearly five centuries, a chamber, so well concealed that its very existence has never been suspected by any but those whom the custom of the family has admitted to the secret. It was originally constructed, as you may suppose, to afford a secure hiding-place for valuable papers, and, if need were, for members of the family, in troublous times; and, the better to insure its not being discovered, three persons alone were suffered to be cognizant of its existence at the same time, and that under an oath of secrecy of a most frightful form; these were, the lord, the next heir, and a third person; and, in the beginning of the last century that third person was a Jesuit, called Father Hugh, the original of the portrait there, hanging over the chimney-piece in Harry’s bed-room. Poor Harry—I wish he was here, I shall never see him again! Well, this man was high in the confidence of my ancestor, and also in that of the exiled Family—whose partisans we always were, and from whom Father Hugh had promised to obtain a recognition of the Earldom of Falcontower: which, I believe, we represent, if we could make out our case distinctly. This man was lurking in England, ostensibly employed in collecting evidence with respect to the earldom, but, I believe, really engaged in treasonable intrigues on the part of the Stuarts, when warrants were issued for his apprehension; and one evening he was pursued into this castle, where all trace of him disappeared. He was never seen again outside its walls alive or dead, and no one could conceive what had become of him. My ancestor, who then lived at Mowbray Court—ah! those were days indeed—was away at the time, and it was three months before he heard of the story. It afterwards turned out that this unfortunate man, the moment he got off his horse, had shut himself up in the secret chamber which I am about to show you, thereby most effectually baffling his pursuers; but it seems that either he did not know, or had forgotten, how to let himself out again—or, perhaps, had fallen into a fit, or died suddenly; for when the matter blew over, and my ancestor—who had conjectured what the real state of the matter was—came to examine the secret chamber, there he found the body of the Jesuit. It was not in the usual manner corrupted, but seemed to have dried up and withered; and for a long time it lay there, for it was impossible to have it buried without attracting suspicion—which, you know, was no joke in those days—and my ancestor did not like throwing it, like a dead dog, into

the sea. At last, I believe, some French smugglers were persuaded to take it over to France, where it received Christian burial. However, you may suppose, this untoward event did not much improve the character of the chamber. The secret was transmitted in the regular way from father to son ; but, I believe, nobody has visited it this fifty years, until this day I felt myself irresistibly impelled to examine it.'

"Here Mr. Mowbray arose, and, standing on a particular board, began, with a long stick, pushing aside a panel in the wainscot, which slowly moved, and disclosed a narrow vaulted passage in the thickness of the wall.

" 'The contrivance was an ingenious one,' he said ; 'for the panel against which I am pushing is, as you observe, about five feet distant from me : it will not move, unless there is the weight of a man exactly upon this part of the board ; nor does the board, when it is stood upon, give any indication of being anything else than a common plank in the floor. There, take the candle, and examine it. I have seen enough of it for one life ;' and he turned shuddering away.

"I descended into the scene of this tragedy. It was a long, narrow, vaulted room, running in the thickness of the wall ; about eight feet high by eight feet broad, but, I should think, about twenty-five long. At the end was a large stone slab, stretching across its whole length, and apparently intended for a bed. Some small holes, seemingly masked on the outside by ivy, admitted some little air, and less light. The walls were quite bare ; nor was there any article of any sort or kind in the chamber. It was a dreary, ghastly vault as ever I saw ; and I immediately retraced my steps. When I returned, Mr. Mowbray fixed his eyes upon me with an expression of great seriousness, and thus continued his narrative :—

"As I told you," said he, "upon my return from church this morning, I was compelled by an impulse I could not resist to visit that chamber. I had never been in it before, having contented myself with learning how to open it. I went down with the candle. I could see everything there as plainly and distinctly as possible, and there I saw Father Hugh sitting on the slab at the end as plainly as I now see you. He looked steadily at me, and then said in a deep voice with a foreign accent, 'Here found I death, here death finds you. Those Sunday bells you now hear you shall hear but once again.'

"I was quite clear that Mr. Mowbray was so thoroughly convinced of the truth of his story that it would be absolutely impossible ever to shake his faith, and all that I could deduce from it was, that he was labouring under some serious illness ; and feeling that in all probability Dr. Johnson's skill was not quite equal to the crisis, I strongly recommended him to send for an eminent physician from London, at which he laughed.

"I will not deny that that week was one of very great anxiety to me. I suspected he was very ill ; I knew the force of the imagination, and I could not help feeling a misgiving, that in the due course of time this hideous phantasm might assume the form of a ghastly reality. I visited Mr. Mowbray several times during that week. A paleness seemed to creep over him ; there was a wildness of the eye, an appa-

rent restlessness and nervousness, and he seemed particularly anxious that some old tenants, whose names he mentioned, should be cared for when he was gone; but did not allude more directly to his own death. Sunday came, to others a day of rest and freedom from care: to me that Sunday was one of indescribable anxiety, which was much diminished when Mr. Mowbray appeared at church, apparently in his usual health. During the service I hardly dared look at him; the idea was always running in my head that the bell would ring for the *next* time, as soon as the service was concluded, and I indulged a sort of hope that having heard it ring a second time, he might be persuaded to treat the Jesuit's prophecy as a delusion. I concluded the service: I dismissed the congregation. As they rose to depart, I ventured to steal a glance at Mr. Mowbray. My feelings were half doubt and half triumph. He had kneeled and remained kneeling. The bell rang, and its clang sounded very hideous in my ears. Mr. Mowbray did not stir. Some of the neighbours went to ascertain if he was ill: and now a universal hum arose; sounds of terror and dismay spread rapidly through the congregation, for in the very midst of that crowded assembly was a lifeless corpse. His soul was gone to its account."

Such were the circumstances of the death of our hero's father. He left, as we have already stated, an estate of about £700 a year, and as Harry was in India at the time, the house was shut up, and little use was made of it for some time, for when its new owner returned home, his duties with his regiment prevented his spending much of his time there, and, as it happened, it would have been well for his peace of mind had they prevented him from visiting it at all.

One fatal legacy Mr. Mowbray left his son—scepticism in matters of faith; and another dangerous inheritance fell also to him—an indomitable, unconquerable pride; perilous qualities both for a young man beginning life, and the former of which, at the time we speak of, was the cause of the whole course of his existence being embittered, even though the latter, as we have already seen, preserved him from a worse evil.

CHAPTER V.

THERE is a particular sort of night in England which (like a particular sort of man that one meets everywhere) is universally known and universally detested, a pitiless howling night of storm, and sleet, and drift, when nature seems to have forgotten all her good nature, and become little better than a blustering ill-conditioned bully, that oppresses the poor, but cannot reach the rich; when the rain and the wind play at drum and fife, the one rising in an unearthly treble, the other descending in an unheavenly patter; amidst which charivari of the elements the universal voice of mankind has, from the earliest ages, declared in all manner of languages, that Old Nick is very busy, and the ladies who fill his book of beauty, viz. the witches, are very merry: a sort of night which, however often such a one may occur in our rough climate seldom fails to bring with it an inward, unspoken, but not less distinctly felt sensation of gratitude, that we are not exposed to its fury (mingled, it is to be hoped, with *some* good wishes for those that are): on such a night as this two ladies might be seen, in a small village on the south coast of England, sitting together in an apartment whose decorations and furniture, simple and even scanty though they were, were marked by that characteristic which money cannot command, the impress of good taste, whilst its limited dimensions tended rather to enhance than diminish the appearance of comfort, which far outweighs lofty ceilings and marble columns on a blowy night in December.

Still the comfort was barely comfort, everything was neat and tidy; everything was in its proper place; but there was no luxury, and little or no ornament. There was a harp and a pianoforte, but they were not for pleasure, for it was from giving instructions in music and drawing that the inmates of that humble abode derived the principal part of their subsistence; and a very cursory glance at the room shewed that whatever happiness existed there, owed nothing to the wealth of this world. The tea-things had just been removed, and by the side of the elder lady various objects of female industry already occupied the table; whilst an open volume, lying by the side of the younger lady, indicated that she was about to read aloud to her mother, whose work, be it observed, was neither a dog about to wash his paws, nor a human brute looking out of a window with a pistol in his hand, nor any other of the amenities of lamb's-wool, but simply an article of dress. Yet for a time the needle lay still, both were plunged in a train of thought, which neither seemed inclined to break, and it was evident that between them and the burning coals upon which their eyes were fixed, visions interposed of far more interest than the ever-varying forms of fire that shifted and flickered before them. Unhappily, to judge from the expression of their countenances, that interest was a painful one, and for some considerable time neither broke the silence within, that contrasted strangely with the turmoil without.

"God help the poor sailors that are exposed to this storm," said the elderly lady at last, as a blast passed over the house with a voice of thunder, rocking the chimneys, and howling like a wild beast demanding its prey: "I am afraid that we shall have more wrecks this winter."

"I never hear of a storm from the south-west, Mamma, without trembling," returned the other: "I cannot understand how men can be sailors."

"Poor girl," murmured the mother, "she little knows what the sea cost her; and yet *he* was no sailor."

The young lady, her reverie thus interrupted, took up the book, and seemed about to commence reading aloud. The elder lady, Mrs. Hastings, as far as could be judged from her appearance, was between thirty and forty years of age. She still retained the traces of great beauty, yet they were but traces, for grief and care had impressed their seal too deeply on her countenance to admit of what is called good looks remaining; but though the bloom of youth, its freshness and brightness were gone, time could not efface form, the classic cast of features still remained, and shewed what had been, and indeed it was not difficult now to recall the image of her beauty, for the striking likeness between her and her daughter afforded a faithful representation of what she must have been in the days of her youthful prime.

Clara Hastings was now in her nineteenth year, but her commanding figure, tall and fully developed, gave her the air of being a year or two older; rich heavy clustering ringlets of sunny hair fell down to her shoulders, and though her complexion was fair to the verge of paleness, her eyes were of a deep blue, shaded by long dark lashes. The expression of her countenance was now grave almost to melancholy, and upon this occasion she was not only melancholy but manifestly also troubled in her mind; sometimes an expression of sadness would steal over her face, yet with that sadness mingled tenderness, and anon, a cloud would pass over her brow, that contrasted strangely with the otherwise amiable expression of her features. Once, and but once, she fairly hid her face in her hands and sobbed aloud, but that momentary weakness as momentarily passed away, and again there was a gleam of pride in her eye, the pride of a victory over herself. Still, however, if there were some symptoms of wavering and indecision, the expression of her lips changed not, resolution was distinctly stamped upon them; the high hearted will that would not yield was expressed in their silent compression that gave assurance of firmness, that no words that could have issued from them could have done.

With respect to the history of these two ladies, little was known in the village of Somerton, excepting that about twelve years before the period we speak of, they had arrived, nobody knew how and nobody knew whence, at the cottage they now occupied. During all this time they had mixed little with the village society, their means appeared to be very limited, for Mrs. Hastings from her first arrival had endeavoured to increase them by giving, as we have already said, instruction in music, drawing, and some minor branches of female ac-

complishments, in which of late years, Clara had been able to render her efficient assistance. Highly respected by the neighbouring gentry, and beloved by the poor for the benevolent and charitable disposition that was ever ready, with kindness and sympathy, when in truth it had little else to give, they were, as must be admitted, somewhat unpopular with the homeopathic magnates of the village who voted them proud. Mrs. Hastings had never laid aside her widow's weeds, and though courteous in her manners, and shrinking from no kindly intercourse with her neighbours, she still made no confidants or even intimacies among them, nor did the young Clara shew any disposition to establish an eternal friendship with any of the long tailed, short trousered young ladies, in whose persons the rising beauty and fashion of Somerton was embodied.

Above all things, neither of them ever alluded to the history of their former life, excepting at one period, when stung by some ill-natured remarks, made in all arcadian simplicity by one of the matrons of the hamlet, at a village merry-making, (a butcher's wife playing two-penny whist), Mrs. Hastings condescended to request the clergyman of the parish, the Rev. Mr. Marsden, to examine the certificate of her marriage, which he did, and found therein that in the month of March, in the year of grace 1812, Clara Harley had been united in holy matrimony to Hugo Hastings, by the Rev. Jacob Broadside, chaplain of His Majesty's ship Thunderer, then on the Mediterranean station, thereby shutting the mouths of the Somertonians for the future upon that subject.

As at her first arrival she still retained her beauty unimpaired, several suitors sought her hand, all of whose offers she gently but firmly declined, until it seemed to be understood in the neighbourhood that she did not intend marrying again, though Mr. Montague Marsden, the brother of the reverend gentleman above mentioned, could by no means be made to understand this, and continued to make a proposal of marriage to her about once in every two years, and always with the same result; and strange to say, the gentleman not being of a very excitable turn of mind, and being of opinion that a great deal of consolation may be found in curious crusted old port, which at the worst commutes a heart-ache for a head-ache, took a philosophical view of the subject, and considering her refusal in the same light as if she had declined letting him her cottage, or in any other way had found it impossible to enter into his views upon any common business transaction, consoled himself with the apothegm 'Better luck next time,' and by no means suffered his biennial rejection to interfere with his friendship for her, or his fondness for Clara, to whom he had from the first taken a great fancy, and to whom he had recently been able, as we shall see, to render a most important service.

After a few years, the first curiosity excited by their arrival had died away; the neighbours generally had ceased to interest themselves with the circumstances of Mrs. Hastings' former life; many of them indeed seemed inclined to go the length of minding their own business and leaving her in peace and quietness, to pursue the only object that seemed now to occupy her thoughts, the education of her child, in

which she was as successful as the fondest parent could desire. Deeply imbued herself with the soundest principles, those principles strengthened and confirmed by the early misfortunes that had taught her in the first bloom of youth and beauty, to look beyond this world for that consolation the world cannot give, she had laboured earnestly and trustfully, to instil into the mind of her beloved and loving daughter, those principles of eternal truth, upon which rest the foundations of immortality. She had laboured not in vain, and it was with a chastened feeling in which the mother's pride was subdued by the christian's thankfulness that she saw her Clara grow up in loveliness, alike of mind and person. The hour of trial was however at hand.

The castle of Falconsrag was in the immediate neighbourhood of the village of Somerton. From the first hour of their arrival, none had been more forward in offers of assistance and acts of kindness towards them than the late Mr. Mowbray, and that too with a tact that was hardly to be expected from his singular, or as a disciple of the German school might term it, angular disposition. Perhaps it was the instinct of the fallen gentleman that looked kindly and feelingly upon gentle blood yet more distressed than himself; perhaps some motive of a tenderer character might have actuated him, for there were many who said that Mrs. Hastings might, if she so pleased, have become mistress of all that remained of the broad lands of the Mowbrays, and winked when they said so, as such people are accustomed to do on such occasions; perhaps he proposed to her and perhaps he did not, nobody knew, so every body was positive on one side or other, but however that may be, an unrestrained intimacy existed between the young people. Harry Mowbray, a high spirited, high hearted, generous youth, with a great taste for active sports, and yet a strong literary turn, found in Clara, an ever cheerful and ever welcome companion. He had already waded through the greater part of the Fairy Queen, but had more abandoned himself to the witchery of the great Wizard of the North, whose tales of wild adventure, and wilder adventurers, highlander and borderer, love and battle, realising themselves to his glowing imagination from the masterly skill with which the poet gave these creatures of his brain 'a local habitation and a name,' found a readier echo in his heart, and he fully entered into Clara's feelings; when, upon approaching the end of the Lady of the Lake, she suddenly threw down the book in an extasy of delight, and clapping her tiny hands over her head, shrieked out, "Only think, Harry, Snowdon's knight is Scotland's king." That he was wayward, reckless and unmanageable, as a boy, is not to be denied, but it has not yet appeared that those qualities impede young gentlemen's progress in young ladies good graces in any very serious degree, and the young Clara, prized her boy-knight as highly as he did his little lady-love. He had also that shrinking disposition, that unresisting though it be, is not inclined to be worried more than is necessary by such questions, as What school are you at, What class are you in, What boys are your greatest friends, &c. and seeking to remove itself from annoyance, is consequently christened sulkiness by gentlemen and ladies in spectacles,

who will not and more probably cannot understand the sources of children's pleasure and pain. Sometimes indeed our young hero would be provoked to break into a retort, which sometimes told, as on one occasion, a story in which his worthy father took the most intense delight, a subacid virgin of a certain age, which her nephew and putative heir called "every body's age," having interrupted his perusal of *Waverley* by the agreeable and delicate, and always welcome question, "Well, my little boy, how old are you?" was rather more surprised than pleased at receiving the gruff answer, "Twelve years next April; how old are you?" With Clara, however, he had always been the gentlest of the gentle. They parted in tears when he went to join his regiment in India, and the hurry and confusion of warfare never had driven her image from his mind, nor did she forget her playmate. Upon his return, not very long ago from foreign service, he had come to spend some time at his paternal home, and found the gentle play-fellow of his youth grown into a lovely woman, the spark that had smouldered in his breast blazed up, and about a month before the time we speak of, he had proposed to her.

It was a terrible struggle. To have thrown herself into his arms, to have avowed fully and freely her love for him, and her willingness to join her fate with his for good or evil—for sunshine and storm, was her first impulse; but, alas! that might not be. A giant shadow seemed to stand between them—hideous, repulsive, but not to be removed; and that spectral form was Infidelity. Her brain spun round;—the ghastly phantasmata of a hideous dream seemed whirling around her.—Worlds she would have given to be his wife;—but the wife of an infidel!—She dared not accept him—she could not refuse him.—At last, with a strong effort, she tore herself away from him; and promising a reply on the morrow, sought in the solitude of her chamber the calm that brings no relief—the quiet when the troubled feelings are but stilled by their own intensity.

Mrs. Hastings, to whom she had immediately communicated the circumstance, at first declined interfering. "It was an affair," she said, "for her own heart to decide upon;" but a few hours reflection changed the views of the mother; and when, after a desperate struggle with herself, Clara finally came to the decision that it was not fitting that she should unite herself with a man in whose religious principles she could have no confidence, she was much comforted and supported by finding that her mother entirely agreed with her. Mrs. Hastings calmly and kindly, but not less explicitly, pointed out to her the misery that was likely to result from such an union. She placed before her eyes the terrible trial she would have to endure, seeing day by day him, to whom she was bound by the closest ties in this world, on a path which she must believe could not lead to salvation. She pointed out the probable failure of any attempt to reclaim him; the certain heart-burnings and differences, not to say quarrels, that would accompany such an attempt; and the terrible misgivings that must attend the education of her children, when she must always feel that the lessons she had so carefully inculcated were liable at any moment to be effaced from their minds by a sneer from one whom they had

been taught to love and respect equally with herself. She pointed out the improbability of their even passing through this life in harmony, with this great vital difference yawning like an impassable gulf between them; and finally, blessing herself in the firmness of principle that had supported her through such a trial, she left her to such repose as she might be able to obtain, promising in the morning to announce the decision to Henry.

He at first was inclined to insist upon hearing it from her own mouth, but Mrs. Hastings' remonstrance prevailed; and after a short argument, in which, whilst he admitted that his religious opinions were by no means orthodox, or indeed settled at all, he protested bitterly upon that being considered a reason for not marrying him, he was compelled to acquiesce, and rejoined his regiment in a state of mind that immediately attracted the notice of his brother officers, to whom he seemed completely changed, and no longer the same man.

Nor was this the only cause that saddened the mother and daughter. With great difficulty and economy Mrs. Hastings, whose means were extremely limited from the first, had contrived to subsist herself and to bring up her daughter upon a sum incredibly small; but still no economy could have enabled her to exist, without the melancholy resource of occasionally trenching upon her little capital; this could not go on forever, and long foreseeing what must be done at last, Mrs. Hastings, herself highly accomplished, had laboured sedulously to impart those accomplishments to her daughter, with a view of her ultimately earning a decent subsistence for herself as a governess, and the hour was now rapidly approaching that they must part. Clara, however, was so far fortunate that she was not destined to undergo the misery of petty tyranny that is so often the dreary lot of that unfortunate class when they have to commence their career, as is too commonly the case, in vulgar families, to whom the pride of having a governess would be imperfect without the pleasure of assuming a superiority over her—a vulgarity which, contemptible though it be, has full power to embitter the life of a young woman, removed in early life from parents and friends, and pining in all the desolation of solitude and neglect. She had obtained an engagement in the family of Lord Ellesmere, and was to enter upon the duties of her charge with the new year; and it was felt as a piece of real good fortune, both by mother and daughter, that this was to be the first scene of her labours. She was indebted for this to Mr. Montague Marsden, who had private and domestic reasons of his own for his exertions in the matter, as we shall hereafter see, and who, though himself anything but a person liable to be suspected of mystery, had, nevertheless, some connexion with the Ellesmere family that nobody could ever understand or describe.

Her qualifications for that office in the eyes of the Marchioness, were more the sweetness of her disposition, the soundness of her principles, and her ladylike manners, than any presumed extraordinary skill in teaching, for she was intended to be more a moral instructress, and deeply trusted companion to the young lady, than a mere forcing machine to cram her with as much accomplishments as she could be persuaded to

swallow, (and forget as soon as possible) and so turn her out a musical doll with ringlets, and a smattering of Italian. Lady Ellesmere thought more of the importance of having her daughter, then about twelve years of age, *never* out of the company of a superior-minded person, and so far Clara's prospects were brighter than the entrance to such a profession commonly is; but still she and her mother had never been separated before. The time was rapidly approaching, and the sorrow of parting lay very heavy on both mother and daughter.

Suddenly Clara raised her eyes, and laid down the book. "Did you hear anything?" said she.

"No," said Mrs. Hastings; "I hear nothing but the howling of the storm."

"I thought I heard firing," said Clara; "there is another,—I heard that quite plain!"

Mrs. Hastings listened for a moment, but the young lady's ear had not deceived her—gun followed gun in rapid succession. "Merciful powers!" said she, "is another of those terrible scenes of death and destruction at hand?"

Still the heavy booming of the cannon, evidently signals of distress, mingled with the storm, and left no doubt from the loudness of the sound, that the ship from which it proceeded, was close to the shore, if not actually on shore.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. Montague Marsden sat in his dining room after dinner and stirred the fire. Every man thinks he can stir the fire better than any other man, so Mr. Montague Marsden seemed to derive no little comfort from the feeling of conscious superiority that the performance gave him, and he looked with a bland expression of benevolence and approval upon a bottle of curious old port, of which potent liquid he was accustomed to observe, that it was the natural wine of a true born Briton, and likewise upon a dish of walnuts, of which he was accustomed also to observe, that it was a very bad arrangement of Providence that made them so indigestible. From the walnuts he passed into a reverie, a brown study, a train of thought or a state of abstraction, whichever the reader may please to term it, which lasted about half an hour, during which time he sat musing and sighing and sipping port wine, like a faithful lover as he was.

Mr. Montague Marsden was a little oily globular man, with a roundish reddish nose, a bald bullet head, and a ponderous pendulous double chin. His shoes were loose, for he was shod on anti-corn principles: loose also was his neckcloth, as if though braving apoplexy by the expansion within, he was well resolved that it should not be forced upon him by the pressure from without; the three lower buttons of his waistcoat, released from their charge, said as plainly as buttons could say, "We would not *now* call the Lord Mayor our uncle," and yet, notwithstanding that comfort seemed incarnated in his person, Mr. Montague Marsden appeared ill at ease. He put his hands in his pockets, he perched his little legs upon the fender, he pursed up his mouth, and still, from time to time, broken sentences escaped his lips. "That getting Clara the place at Lord Ellesmere's was a grand move of mine—she'll be deadly lonely now—we'll ask them to dinner on Saturday—suppose they'll come—shew her what a comfortable fire-side is—what sort of a life the mistress of *this* house would lead—to be sure she *has* seen it before—and a roast turkey—she *has* refused me four times—four times in nine years—very extraordinary.—Well, she never can have the face to refuse me a fifth time—can she?—Clara will be gone—she'll be so lonesome—and Maria never *will* have dinner ready in time—girls are so giddy (Mr. Marsden's sister Maria was a girl of thirty)—There *is* something mysterious about her history too—wonder is the late Mr. Hastings really dead, (here one eye closed)—so odd her refusing me four times, I never thought she could have gone beyond the three—hope she's not too cunning—widows sometimes are—don't think *she* is—" the other eye seemed inclined to follow, he made an effort to open both; the fire appeared to be sending up long streaks of flame before him; he nodded; he winked; ideas, such as they were, began to jostle one another in his head; there was a humming in his ears, he slumbered—he slept—he snored.—

Mr. Marsden did not remain very long in a state of such utter abstraction from all sublunary matters, for in a very few minutes, or rather, measuring time philosophically by events rather than by arbitrary divisions, in a very few snores his senses began to steal up from below in an unsatisfactory, darkness visible sort of manner; presenting, like photographic portraits, an image which the unfortunate subject of their operations *cannot* reject, however little he may like it.

The first distinct vision that rose before Mr. Marsden's eyes, or more properly speaking, *behind* Mr. Marsden's eyes, was a fancy sketch of the late Mr. Hastings, with very large black whiskers, and an oak plant to correspond in his hand. Mr. Marsden would as soon have seen Old Nick. This appalling spectre probably arose from the walnuts, but it instantly vanished, and then an unusually bright blaze from the fire lit up the torch of Hymen from the ashes of the deceased husband, and the dreamer, blue coated, brass buttoned, white waistcoated, and black trowsered, stood in the parish church of Somerton. N.B. It was *not* Sunday. His brother, the Reverend William, was at the altar, and was calling him and every body else "dearly beloved." There was a strong smell of orange flowers, and opposite him stood Mrs. Hastings. There was a good deal of originality in this dream of his, for probably no other man in England, even with the assistance of a bilious fever, ever dreamed of such a preternatural incongruity as Mr. Montague Marsden and Mrs. Hastings being united in holy matrimony; and to any one else such a vision would truly have not only ended but also begun with amazement, though to him it was merely the post prandial repetition of a waking dream, enlivened with port wine. We are here bound to state that we do not consider port wine generally conducive to matrimony, (unless in some remarkably successful cases, where the fair lady has been exhibited to the patient immediately after a copious dose), on the contrary, we consider that it leads directly to cigars, which placing the gentleman in the Bachelors' Paradise, naturally prevents his coveting the Benedict's Heaven with due intensity. However, we shall enter no farther into the physiology of Oporto or Havannah. Mr. Montague Marsden is dreaming, and in his golden dream is placing the ring on the finger of Mrs. — Hastings + Marsden. The lady oscillated between the two names, another anonymous moment and the transmutation would have been complete, but '*dis aliter visum*,' a sound, like a single and sudden clap of thunder, changed the scene, the altar became an omnibus upset to form a barricade, the book in the hand of the clerk petrified into a paving stone, the clerk himself Marsellaised into a hero of July, the Reverend William Parisienned into Lafayette on his white horse, and the heavy booming of cannon, the sharp rattle of musketry, the cries of the wounded, the exhortations of the leaders, and the shouts of the combatants, informed Mr. Marsden that he was somehow or other involved in the glorious three days of July, and "assisting" at the French revolution—then fresh in all men's memories. He did not half like it, (this was the walnuts again), shot followed shot, the Place Vendôme was the scene, and suddenly the column fell at his feet with a hideous crash. This was too much of a joke, and with a start and a snort he awoke, and found

that in keeping time with the Marsellaise and its accompaniments, he had kicked down the poker, which, in a dream, is perfectly competent to represent the column in the Place Vendome. The forms of the dream fled fast away; Love and War vanished together, and Mr. Marsden returned to the consciousness of being a peaceable bachelor in December, with a bottle of port at his elbow. But, unhappily, all that dream was not imaginative, the sounds that had changed its character still continued; he could distinctly hear gun after gun, and on that coast he very well knew that the sound of artillery announced danger to human life as assuredly as it did on the field of battle.

With a hurried exclamation of 'A ship in distress,' Mr. Marsden opened the window, and looked out into the night. The night was bad enough and rather worse, being in fact the same night that we have already described in the last chapter. It looked black, it smelt of spray, it felt raw, it sounded rough, and Mr. Marsden, feeling none of his senses gratified, did what all sensible men do in such circumstances, shut it out, and proceeded to gratify the remaining one of tasting, by means of port wine and walnuts.

"Surely," said he, "when Mrs. Hastings finds herself absolutely alone with the silver spoons and a five pound note in the house, on such a night as this, she'll feel the want of a protector;" and so saying, he grasped the poker, probably with the view of demolishing an imaginary burglar, sturdy beggar, or rival, as the case may be, though it might have been to stir the fire, which question must remain unsolved with the quadrature of the circle; for whatever intentions he had, they never ripened into action, as at this moment his brother William entered, not the nocturnal shadow of an imaginary priest of Hymen, or a phantasmagoric champion of liberty, but a real bona fide thirteen stone rector of Somerton.

"Come down to the beach, Montague," said he, "there is death in the blast, there is a ship ashore on the sands, and they will never get the life-boat off, unless we go."

"My dear William," said Mr. Montague Marsden, casting a wistful glance to the decanter, thence to the fire, thence to the walnuts, and thence to the window, as much as to say I know the difference between the things within and the things without, a great deal better, "of what earthly use should I be, I never touched an oar in my life; besides, I have not done dinner yet, besides I have got a cold, besides, tea is ready."

"There are lives in danger."

"What can I do? I'm not the Humane Society, am I?"

"You can shew an example."

"The Lord forbid," returned Mr. Montague Marsden, in utter horror at the bare idea of shewing an example, or indeed of shewing his rubicund nose at all in such a night as that.

"You can help to get the life-boat manned."

"I should not be able to make myself even heard in such a storm."

"You have some influence with the fishermen, for you give double price for turbot, consider, the poor sailors may soon be food for fishes."

"More likely to get an influenza for myself; and if you go in

the life-boat, as I suspect you will, you'll become food for fishes yourself, instead of feeding on them like a good churchman."

"Well, I see I must go alone, it is always the way with you, you would not cross the room, I do believe, to save your own life,"—and so he departed.

"It is always the way with William, that he never is happy unless he has got something to do that any body else would detest. I should not wonder if he were to go in the life-boat himself, notwithstanding my warning, but he never minds me. However, I must go and tell Maria to ask the Hastings to dinner on Saturday;"—and winding up with that glorious discovery, the concluding glass of sherry that adds three hundred and sixty five glasses to the year, he sought the drawing room.

Upon arriving at the beach Mr. Marsden found his worst apprehensions realised. The vessel was lying about a quarter of a mile from the shore, broadside on to the sea, which broke over her violently. She still continued to fire guns, but each time the interval between them became longer and longer, as if those on board found more and more difficulty in loading; and the sea ran so high, that it seemed almost hopeless to expect even the life-boat to live in it. The boat was however there, and Mr. Marsden was exerting all his eloquence to get a crew for her; offering not only liberal payment, but to take an oar himself, when he fancied he saw by the glimmering light of the moon, which was now beginning to show objects more distinctly, something like a black body floating on the top of the waves. A few seconds decided that matter, and it became clear that the body of a man was drifting rapidly towards the shore. It entered the surf, and for a moment disappeared in a gigantic wave that raising its crest many feet high in the air, came swelling in with its helpless load, apparently clambering over those in its front and overarching for a moment, broke with a heavy plunge and a hoarse roar, and then spreading a silvery sheet of foam all around, rippled back with a musical gurgling over the shingle, leaving its burden, whether alive or dead none could tell, behind it. Before the next wave had time to come in and sweep it back again into the waters, the body had been secured and dragged high and dry upon the beach. It was that of a gentleman; and from the circumstance of his having all his clothes on, it was inferred that he had been carried overboard by accident, and though he seemed dead, he was immediately conveyed up to the nearest house, which chanced to be that of Mr. Montague Marsden.

"Good Heavens!" said that gentleman at the first sight of the body, "it is Sir Thomas Horton! Maria, get a jug of hot negus."

The usual remedies were applied, and for a long time applied in vain, but still there were indications of life, slight indeed, but sufficient to induce the continuance of the efforts to revive it; and at last those efforts were crowned with success. The symptoms of animation came more and more frequent, and by midnight the perils and dangers of the shipwreck were forgotten in a sound sleep, and Mr. Montague Marsden had finished the negus. In the morning the sufferer was sufficiently recovered to give the following account of the wreck.

"The vessel is the *Mary Anne* of London, to Madras, where, Mr. Marsden, you know I was going. On Sunday we cleared the Downs, and on Tuesday evening it came on to blow fresh from the southward, and we were obliged to carry a press of sail to keep her off the shore; soon after we found that we had sprung a leak, which however could be kept under by manning the pumps a couple of hours a day. This lasted till to-day, when we got caught in that infernal trap between those headlands that seem set on purpose to catch vessels, and were well in it before we saw where we were; for the snow fell fast, and froze as it fell, and we could not see a cable's length. At last we did get a sight of some headland or other about a mile and a half to leeward, and immediately took in sail and let go the small bower, which brought her up, and she rode for about an hour and then drove; they now let go the sheet anchor, and she rode a couple of hours more and then drove again, and struck in about twenty minutes. You never heard such a howl as was then set up, and when I came on deck I saw that it was a bad business. Not a boat could live in the sea that was running, and it was clear to me that the vessel would go to pieces during the night. The sea was making a clean breach over her, and suddenly the mizen went by the board, and as I was holding on by the mizen rigging I went overboard too, and how I was saved I have no idea. I suppose you know something about it."

"I hope you found your bed comfortable, Sir Thomas," said Mr. Montague Marsden.

"Why, considering where I came from," returned the other, with something of a sneer, "I think you may be sure of that."

"Ah, true, it must have been dreadfully cold."

Sir Thomas glared at the speaker for a moment in a manner that made Mr. Marsden feel exceedingly uncomfortable, and then continued, "There was one thing however that I remember, and that was, that the instant I found myself in the water, I came to the conclusion that nothing but a miracle could save me; and whilst my strength was failing me, and a conviction of the inevitable presence of death forced itself irresistibly on me, in short, whilst I was dying, for no man could die more than I did, the whole of my past life was presented to my mind in one unbroken and indivisible picture, as plainly and distinctly as if I was then at that moment engaged in the commission of every act that I ever performed in my life. Eton, the Irrawaddy, myself as a midshipman, as a post captain, Algiers, Ellesmere, were all heaped up together with the minutest and most insignificant event, word, or thought, that ever occurred to me; and yet all without the slightest confusion or indistinctness. I do not know whether every dying man has the same sort of bird's eye view of his past life, but I should suppose if it is the case, it must be rather alarming to some of them." This last observation was made in a sneering tone, that sounded perfectly horrible coming from the lips of a man who but the evening before had absolutely passed the gates of death—and returned again: but Sir Thomas Horton was a man of a very peculiar turn of mind.

The wreck had gone to pieces in the course of the night, and very few men were saved. The shore was strewed with corpses, fragments of

wreck, casks and trunks, among which Sir Thomas's having been found, he was enabled to dress himself, and soon afterwards strolled out to see what had become of his late companions.

In the course of this day Mrs. Hastings and Clara had visited the village to make some small purchases, and were returning home, conversing mournfully of the separation which awaited them, when, they remarked on the road before them, a stranger; who, evidently unconscious that he was observed by anybody, walked slowly along, frequently pausing and talking rapidly to himself. When they approached he stopped dead short, and stood by the side of the road with his arms folded till they passed. He was a man seemingly in the prime of life, of an appearance that would have been called distinguished, but for a peculiar lowering of the countenance, a singular gloomy expression of the eye, that produced in the breast of both mother and daughter an indistinct but painful feeling of nervousness, that the mere presence of a casual stranger by no means accounted for. When, however, they came close to him, Mrs. Hastings trembled violently, she felt a conviction that she had seen that face before, under circumstances that she hardly dared look back upon, and both she and Clara felt that in his glance there was something serpent-like, something that those upon whom it had once settled, would not willingly meet again; both quailed under the glassy stare he fixed upon them as they passed, and when they had gone a few yards, Clara, half laughing at her unnecessary alarm, was tempted to look round and take another view of its object. The stranger stood immovable. His eyes were still fixed upon them, but there was on his lips a smile of such malignancy, and such a cold pitiless expression in his eye, that she turned hastily away with an involuntary shudder, and looking at her mother's face, was somewhat startled at observing that she was deadly pale.

"Clara," said Mrs. Hastings, "I wish I had not seen that man, I have seen him before, and never did I see him without his being connected with some evil to me or mine. That cold unfeeling look of his. Oh, it recalls horrible scenes."

Clara was astonished, never before had she heard her mother talk in this manner. The idea of her entertaining fear, that almost seemed superstitious, had never occurred to her, and she marvelled greatly what might be the cause of her being so moved at the sight of the stranger, yet not venturing to ask for further explanation, the two ladies walked home in silence. Scarcely had they passed before the smile on the stranger's face broke into a low mocking laugh.

She "It is ~~by~~ by heavens," said he, "who could have dreamed it.—How exactly the girl is what *she* was then, and that poor fool Hastings, where is he?—aye, where is he?—the sea is very deep—yet not so deep as—Now for my revenge. I owe it,—I, the spurned—I, the rejected—I, that could with one word—Proud creature, you little know who holds the key that would unlock the bonds of death, ha, ha!—One word—and the grave shall close on me—and that word unspoken, ha, ha.—Yes, when you sent your spies with their grave looks and their sly questions; their wise words about wounds in the head, cerebral con-

gestion, that thought they could trap Thomas Horton, who laughed them to scorn,—ha, ha. Well truth is strange, stranger than fiction. I never thought to see her alive in England. She knew me too.—I say, you boy, what is the name of those two ladies?"

"Mrs. Hastings and Miss Clara, Sir," said the boy, with a tug at the lock of hair in front of his head, that seemed to grow for courtesy's sake.

"Ah," muttered the stranger, "she's not ashamed of her name at all events. Here boy, here is six-pence to buy marbles with; that is the first step those urchins make; first buy marbles to play with, then steal marbles to play with, then steal anything else to play with, till they steal once too often. Marbles are the seed, and the tree that grows from it is the gallows. Ha, there is an old castle, I must go and see it; I suppose it is tumbling down."

Though both Mrs. Hastings and Clara considered Mr. Marsden's invitation to dinner a most serious nuisance, still they felt that they could not well decline it under the circumstances, for they were really at that moment under the most serious obligations to him, and accordingly they accepted it, and Mr. Marsden's hopes rose proportionally, they had reached a point where no anchor could hold him, when Saturday came and with it the roast turkey, wherewith he had cunningly baited the hook that was to secure the affections of the lady. There was again some originality in his idea of fishing for hearts with turkeys, but as the modes of courtship vary in different nations, so according to their different ways of thinking, do they in individuals, and to Mr. Montague Marden, whose heart and soul was in what he eat and drank, a well roasted turkey with bacon and sausages to correspond, seemed a very delicate attention.

Indeed the influence of turkeys is not sufficiently understood in this country. They manage those things better in France, where the biped with feathers very properly influences the biped without, and the ministerial or rather royal majorities in both chambers are composed of senators, stuffed with roast turkeys, stuffed with truffles; nay, so well do our gastroerotic (if there is not such a word, there ought to be) neighbours understand this, that those legislators whose course in the chambers is supposed to follow the courses in the *Salle à manger* of the Tuilleries, are known by the name of "*députés truffées*;" and if the opinion of M. Guizot, who is a sort of man that expects to be believed when he says a thing, and for some time afterwards besides, be correct, viz. that Paris is, always has been, and always will be, the centre of the civilization of the (world and very likely of the moon into the bargain) a sort of moral magnetic pole, it is impossible to say to what extent the "*Dindes truffées*," and "*Foie d'oie gras*," may affect the destinies of the human race, (and the lunatics.) It is probably on account of the cosmopolitan value and importance of Paris that the strongest garrison in Europe is kept in it, and that the guns that surround it, instead of turning their backs upon it in their usual irreverent manner, look it full in the face; but nevertheless, Paris, with all its faults, is much to be lauded, the great objection to it being that one cannot get to it without passing through France.

This digression is not intended to exhibit the author's knowledge of History and Geography, but to demonstrate that Mr. Montague Marsden, in attributing influence over the mind to eatables, was not altogether the idiot, that all our lady readers under twenty-five years of age, will pronounce him out of hand, for expecting to find a way to Mrs. Hastings' heart through the breast of a turkey.

Both that lady and Clara were somewhat startled at recognising in Sir Thomas Horton, the mysterious stranger of the day before. However he shewed no symptoms of ever previously having seen her, and if she did remember him she was not disposed to recall to his recollection the circumstances under which they had met. So as we all know what a plague it is waiting for dinner, we will forthwith plunge "*in medias res*," suppose the grace said by the Rev. William, the soup and fish discussed, the turkey in presence, and the unconscious Mrs. Hastings nibbling at the bait.

Mr. Marsden was of course urging his suit with all the silent eloquence of bread sauce, vegetables, bacon, and sausages, and Miss Maria Marsden, his sister, seemed somewhat inclined to make lawful prize of their shipwrecked guest.

"I discovered to-day, as I was strolling along the beach, looking after the wreck," said Sir Thomas, "in a curious half ruined castle that I came across, the residence of an old friend of mine."

"What our friend Captain Mowbray?" said Mr. Marsden, "was it?"

"The same," returned he; "he and I have seen some service together. I had him in my boat when we were on the Irrawaddy, and I took a great fancy to him; I never shall forget his pluck the first time he ever was under fire, he was desperately wounded."

"What courage you must have had to face those barbarians, Sir Thomas," said Miss Maria; "I never can understand how men can fight."

"Courage," said Sir Thomas, "it was the greatest fun I ever saw. I never was so much excited in my life as the first time I ever was in action, when we came hand to hand. The sensation of seeing the arm that was just raised against your life relax and drop, and the man go down before your own sword, is finer than anything you can conceive, and so I fancy thinks my friend Mowbray."

"Indeed, Sir Thomas," interrupted Clara, reddening, "I am very sure that he does not think so at all. Captain Mowbray has often told me that though he endeavoured to do his duty in battle, still he never was reconciled to seeing people killed: he used to say, that the strongest feeling that he had, was an intense anxiety lest his men should give way, but that he never could put a fellow creature to death without reluctance."

"You never saw him head an attack, Miss Hastings," returned Sir Thomas, with a smile at once sarcastic and significant as if he had detected a lurking predilection for Harry in the young lady's mind, and took a malignant pleasure in mortifying her; "to see him raging in the middle of a confused swarm of half naked savages, that his men were tearing their way through with their bayonets, you would suppose that he meant to tear them to pieces with his own hands, and eat

them into the bargain, and indeed, there would have been some sense in that, for we often had little else to eat. Would you believe it, Mr. Marsden, that some of the salt meat that was served out to us in 1824, was literally what remained of the stores that had been returned from the Java expedition in 1809?"

"Bless me," said Mr. Marsden, helping himself to bread sauce, "what inhumanity! you must have suffered dreadful hardships."

"Yes, in the boats we had hardships enough, little to eat, little to drink, and little shelter, plenty of work and plenty of fighting; however sailors have a peculiar philosophy of their own upon that subject, for Jack reasons, that it would be too hard upon a man, to work hard, live hard, die hard, and go to the Devil after all, and that consoles Jack under all his troubles. It was no great consolation to poor Mowbray though, when he was laid up with his wound, for I do not think he believes that there is such a thing as a devil;"—and he stole another glance at Clara, that shewed him a tear standing in her eye. "Women are such cowards in those matters," muttered he, "I'll try her a bit further."—"What I liked principally in Mowbray," continued he, "was that he was such an independent-minded man, above all prejudices and superstition; he looked at everything through his own eyes and not through the Archbishop of Canterbury's spectacles." Poor Clara was silent; the careless, jeering tone in which Sir Thomas alluded to the fatal bar between her and the happiness she otherwise would have enjoyed with Harry, was inexpressibly painful to her; but though her blood boiled within her, when Sir Thomas attributed to him, the savage delight in carnage that is too often latent in our minds, wanting but the sight of blood to develop it in all its demoniac hideousness, and she readily and unhesitatingly vindicated him from the obloquy of taking pleasure in destroying life, she felt that to this charge of scepticism, she had nothing to say, and recent circumstances made that feeling very painful to her. At any other time she would have been highly amused at a little bit of characteristic bye-play, that at this moment occurred between her host and his coachman, as it was she had no heart to laugh at anything.

Mr. Montague Marsden had for some time given indications of suffering not as might be supposed,

"The pang of despised love, * * *

When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin,"

for he trusted that his quietus was already made with the skewer that had secured the livered and gizzarded wings, with which he was already soaring towards the dominions of Hymen, but of suffering from one of the thousand causes of sorrow that a discriminative Providence scatters in such boundless profusion in the path of personages of very acute sensibilities (about themselves). He looked first grave, then melancholy, then annoyed, then distressed, a spasmodic action of the nostril seemed about to herald an hydraulic action of the eye, and something like a tear had already begun to shew itself when fairly

overcome by the pungency of his feelings and ammonia, he beckoned to the coachman, who, called in for the occasion to wait at table, was still redolent of his vocation, and said in an angry whisper which was audible to Clara alone: "What do you stand smelling like a coach-horse by me for, go and smell like a coach-horse by somebody else, will you?"

"He used to have stand-up fights with our Chaplain, returning from Ava," continued Sir Thomas, "and generally had the best of them, for the chaplain had only read one side of the question, and Mowbray had read both, and was well primed.—I believe he was considerably indebted to Tom Paine, and the other, like most of his cloth, had been accustomed to have all the talk to himself, and made but an indifferent hand of an argument with a man that admitted nothing and took nothing for granted."

"Sir," said the Rev. William, "when a Clergyman announces the words of truth, he is employed in a good matter; those who rejoice to receive them should be suffered to derive benefit and comfort from them, and he is not to be interrupted by every smatterer that lacks capacity to understand them. You would think little of a navigator who held that there was no land, because he saw nothing but sea."

"Oh! I really did not mean to argue the point," said Sir Thomas; "in fact, I do not understand the subject. It seems to me to be much an affair of latitude and longitude, and on board ship the Chaplains are responsible for that part of the duty."

Thoroughly disgusted and indeed almost frightened by this language, the ladies here retired, and before the gentlemen made their appearance in the drawing-room Mrs. Hastings and Clara were gone, fully determined not to encounter that singular being again. How or where she had met him before Mrs. Hastings kept in her own breast, nor did Clara inquire,—and in a few days more, the mother and daughter for the first time in their lives were separated.

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CHAPTER VII.

LORD William Fitzwarine's accident was the cause of no little perplexity to Captain Mowbray, for he had already sent his portmanteau on to Avonmore, and he at first fancied that the party at the house might be broken up by it. However, espying his incredulous friend of last night quietly quitting the course in a direction which he knew did not lead towards Ballymacgallaher, he rode up to him and had his mind set at rest at once upon that subject.

"Is it to break up the party," said Mr. MacGallaher, "because my Lord William's got spilt, that would be a hard case; if he had broken his neck indeed, or may be even his collar bone; but he's not a haporth the worse, he'll not be a week laid up with it.—No, no, my night-cap's at Avonmore, and I'll sleep in it this blessed night; there's a mighty jolly party there, Captain, we'll have great sport, they're nearly all bachelors, the Lord be praised; and I'll tell you what, if there are twenty at dinner to-day, there'll be fifty at luncheon to-morrow, sure the whole country side will be coming to ask after Lord William. There's an Englishman there, Sir, that I'm told shews great sport with his quare idayas about Ireland, one Mr. Wilkins, from the city of London. Good morrow, Mat, did you win your money? —I'll bet a shilling you did."

"Faith did I, Sir," returned Mat, Harry's smuggling friend, "sure I knew the good cause would prosper; so would the Captain there, Sir, if he would have done as I bid him, only he doesn't know the ways of the place, small blame to his honour either; every man should stand up for his own." Harry could not help laughing at the simplicity which concluded that he had backed the grey upon controversial principles, and he and Mr. MacGallaher pursued their way amicably together to Avonmore, where they found that Lord William, though a little what they call in that country, "shuck," was by no means seriously hurt. Quiet and that sort of thing being however considered requisite, he was in bed.

Avonmore castle was a comparatively modern building, though it would be impossible to state exactly what its age was, unless by taking the dates at which the various additions (which had converted something little better than a farm-house, into a castle capable of accommodating forty guests) were made, and striking an average, something like the process in practice at Xeres, where an order for ten year old sherry, is executed by mixing a certain quantity of older wine and a certain quantity of newer wine, which with the proper proportion of colouring stuff, is held to constitute an arithmetical ten year old wine; so the castle of Avonmore, had swelled out by five and six rooms at a time till the original edifice was quite lost, and the ground plan resembled a game of dominoes gone mad. Lord Ellesmere, an English nobleman of

long descent and long rent-roll did not habitually reside here, but made an occasional visit, when he enlivened the Christmas season by filling the house with the nobility, gentry, clergy, and squirearchy of the neighbourhood, whose locality (saving that it would be found to the westward of a line drawn between Derry and Waterford) we abstain from pointing out for prudential reasons, having been credibly informed that a kind friend has lately presented the grand jury of the county with a pair of barking irons, *anglice* duelling pistols, which we doubt not those grave magistrates are perfectly competent to use with effect.

These visits of his Lordship, like angel visits few and far between, earned him golden opinions from all sorts of men, as it was intended they should, for Lord William sat for the county then, and though scenes would sometimes occur that struck English notions as being somewhat animated for a nobleman's dining room, still on the whole they afforded a great deal of amusement to him and his family. Nor were his humbler neighbours forgot; like the good old English gentleman,

"When winter cold brought Christmas old, he opened house to all,
And while he feasted with the great, he ne'er forgot the small;"

and entrapped the affections of the peasantry in certain back slums of the castle, where whiskey did abound, on the strength, or rather *in* the strength of which they unanimously forgave him his Norman descent, swore he was the best landlord that Ireland ever saw, that the best county member that ever sat for the county of, (it was very near slipping out), was the Lord William Fitzwarine, (whom at the general election of 1831, they replaced by a pig-driver), and drank their healths to the verge of intoxication, and sometimes a trifle farther, without in the least suffering any foolish predilection for the family to interfere with the faction fights, houghings, turning up meadows, burnings, shootings, and other popular amusements, in which they and their forefathers had been accustomed to indulge.

The Marquis himself, a grey-headed, frank-hearted old gentleman of the olden school was here in his glory. His house was as full as it could hold conveniently, an enormous table was laid every day, though it must be admitted, that Adam naming the beasts had not a harder task than most of his Lordship's guests would have found the giving a name to the various '*entrées*' wherein M. Lamartine his cook displayed his skill, I beg his pardon, his science. The gentlemen disposed of the question, by consigning them to the personage to whom most troublesome questions are more or less distinctly handed over, and dubbed them at once, '*Frinch divilments*,' whilst the fairer portion of the creation, by a somewhat mischievous arrangement of Lady Sarah's, the second daughter, had been induced to adopt a liberal translation of side dish, and denominate them '*Cote Rotie*.'

The Lady Sarah loved a joke, and small blame to her, and whoever had seen her hazel eyes sparkling and glittering with merry malice when some unsophisticated damsel fell into the trap she had laid would have been much inclined to love the joke for the sake of the eyes

or the eyes for the sake of the joke, and leave off with a very imperfect notion which it was, and a very particular wish to investigate the matter a little farther. Lady Sarah was just eighteen, and in the words of Mr. MacGallaher, a gentleman whom she delighted to honour with the peculiar sort of attention she generally treated her admirers to, viz. quizzing, was as plump as a partridge, as fresh as a four year old, as merry as a cricket, as mischievous as a monkey, and as pert as a magpie, in which epigrammatic and comparative character of her Ladyship, Mr. MacGallaher was not very far from the truth, and though he once gravely complained to the Marquis that Lady Sarah had 'raised the price of flannel at Ballymacdaniel, with the quantity she bought to give the poor creatures on the estate,' he did not press the matter so far as to ask for a prohibition of her purchases; and Lady Sarah was consoled under his displeasure by some scores of widows and orphans' blessings, not perhaps very marketable articles hereabouts, but which may nevertheless accompany her far beyond the boundaries of the Avonmore estate.

The eldest sister, Lady Madelaine, who was four years older, was of a graver turn of mind, and though cheerful enough in her disposition, had nothing of the buoyancy that seemed to set every body laughing when Lady Sarah appeared. There was in her character something of pride, and yet much of tenderness, cold perhaps and reserved towards strangers, she was better loved the better she was known, and many who were at first captivated by the gay abandon of the piquante Sarah, came in the end to prefer the gentle and quiet Madelaine.

The reader will be pleased to recollect that these parties at Avonmore Castle, are not to be taken as samples of society in general in Irish noblemen's houses; they were assembled for purposes of county politics, and were composed not exactly of Lord Avonmore's personal friends, but of Lord William's political supporters; the possession of a certain number of votes, however it may tell at the hustings, confers no polish in the drawing room, upon reaching which hall of expectation, just before dinner, Henry was rather surprised at finding not more than ten or twelve people assembled.

"Why I thought there was a large party in the house," said he to Mr. MacGallaher.

"Wait a bit, and you'll see," said that gentleman, and at the moment dinner was announced, and Lady Sarah falling to his share, our hero proceeded to the dining room, where he was astonished at seeing a table laid for nearly thirty, and still more so when he had settled himself in his place at finding that every one of these places had been filled in the meantime; whether the occupiers came from under the table or from under the stairs, whether they dropped through the ceiling or rose up through the floor, he had no means of judging, but there they were, and evidently with the full intention of enjoying themselves.

"I do not know the names of half these people," said Lady Sarah, observing something like surprise depicted in Henry's countenance, "they never come into the drawing room by any chance. I do not think they like ladies' society, and I believe William is the only person in the house that knows them all; some of them however I do know, that

pale interesting youth who is sitting by Madelaine, is an Englishman, Mr. Wilkins, who has come over here with a variety of crotchets in his head about the Irish people. He says that the leading point in Irish character is the force of imagination, by appealing to which he declares the whole habits and ideas of the nation may be changed ; for instance, he has been endeavouring to impress on the mind of the porter at the lower gate, the merits of a flower garden, a coal fire, &c. by placing a vivid picture of them before his imagination, where it remains, and I should imagine is likely to remain till doomsday, for the man very naturally asks 'Where are they to come from ?' and there is no answer. This gentleman, on my other side, with whom I perceive you are already acquainted, is Mr. MacGallagher, an oddity, and a great friend and enemy of mine, we have the most delicious battles in the world ; and that gentleman with a gigantic pin, is Mr. Fitzgerald, whose father made whiskey, and who considers that he embodies in his own person the dignity of the Earls of Desmond and Kildare, all the nobility of the Pale, and I believe the greater part of the roll of Battle Abbey besides, —and now I have talked long enough, and must beg that you will say something amusing."

"I do not know whether the order to say something amusing has always the desired effect," said Harry, with a smile.

"Now you are looking somewhat more animated," replied the young lady ; "I begin to have some hopes of you ; when I saw you first I trembled, for you looked much more like a love-lorn swain than an officer. Officers always seem to me to be in such spirits."

"You think so because you see us in our holidays," returned Henry, with a faint smile, for the young lady's speech grated harshly on his ears. "You meet us in society, in gentlemen's houses, where every thing is *jour de fête*, and we are enjoying ourselves ; but you do not see us bored to death in detachment, with nothing to do, nobody to talk to, weary month upon month ; nothing to think of, except the slowness of promotion."

"Well, I should have thought it was the pleasantest life a man could lead," said the young lady : "constant change, all excitement, no tiresome plodding over desks, like what they have at the Foreign Office ; no sitting in a crowded house, when they ought to be at balls, like Members of Parliament : at all events it is free from care."

"Soldiers are not exempt from cares," returned Henry ; "misfortunes, disappointments affect them as well as any one else."

"Yes, I know, horses go lame sometimes, and sometimes the colonel is cross, and will not give leave ; indeed, I recollect a gentleman telling me once, that for the first two years he was in the army his life was embittered by tight boots."

"Then you consider that that constitutes the amount of evil that falls to our lot ?"

"About that much," said Lady Sarah ; "of course I do not pretend to know the amount of misery that you endure when you are on guard."

"Ah!" said Henry, with a somewhat bitter smile, "that is always the manner in which your sex reason about men : if a man complains and repines, then they are all tears and compassion; they have no

sympathy with silent suffering, it must be clamorous and take some romantic form to excite their pity."

"Oh, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Sarah.

"If he writes verses, representing himself the victim of the most unheard of calamities, with the assistance of a rhyming dictionary, that enables him to put some sham sentiment into sham poetry, then he is pitied; or if he is a singing man, and can Rubini his woes, then they sympathise with him, or at least fancy they do, for the feeling that is uppermost in his mind at the moment, is triumph at the effect he is producing; but he may suffer in silence, they do not believe that he is suffering, and his heart may tear itself to pieces, without any body caring one pin about it."

"You do us very great injustice, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Sarah, in a graver tone than she had hitherto employed; for she saw, from the bitterness somewhat approaching to rudeness in his manner, that she had touched a chord in his heart that vibrated painfully. It was clear that something weighed heavy on his mind. "Indeed you do, though I do not think you really think what you say: I have a better opinion of you, and I believe you know in your heart, that excepting one, there is no stronger feeling in a woman's breast than sympathy; I have a great mind to be angry with you, but to say truth, Mr. MacGallaher here, is so much worse than even you are, that he monopolises all my indignation. His opinion of women is something perfectly atrocious."

"My opinion of woman, my lady," said Mr. MacGallaher, "is that she is a man-hunting machine."

"Well, as far as that goes, she is not a fortune-hunting machine, as men are, Mr. MacGallaher," retorted the lady; "*they* think of nothing but money, now you must admit that women have much more liberal feelings in that respect."

"Indeed they have, my lady," said Mr. MacGallaher, "much more liberal feelings; a man will sometimes give himself away for money, now a woman will give herself away either for money or rank; they're mighty liberal."

"Really, Mr. MacGallaher, if I did not see you fast asleep in your pew every Sunday, and that the Moslem do not drink bumpers of claret, I should think you were a Mahometan, who held that women have no souls."

"I do not know why a church should not be a resting place for the living as well as the dead; and I do not know what the blacks drink, I suppose spirits; but for a Christian, its time enough to give up claret when he's in his coffin, plenty time enough," replied the gentleman; "and even Mahomet, I believe, does not positively deny women's souls; he says that they have a shambling sort of a soul, and I think so too."

What retort this piece of heterodoxy might have extracted from Lady Sarah, it is impossible to say; but at this moment Mr. Wilkins' voice became audible, he was holding forth upon his favourite subject to Mr. Fitzgerald.

"Sir," said he, "I maintain that the character of every nation has

one main-spring generally differing from all other nations. Thus it is, that if you show a Turk that anything exists, he says it *is*, THEREFORE it must be right; predestinarianism is his leading point. Prove to an Englishman that any thing exists, he says it *is*, THEREFORE it must be wrong: an impatience of inertion is his national characteristic, which developes itself in colonies, reform bills, railways, Cobbett's Register, tours on the Rhine, factories, dissent, and those sort of things: now, on the contrary, a German is a statu-quoist, he wants order at whatever price, liberty, comfort, common sense, every thing in his mind is of small importance compared to order. A German conducteur would much sooner have a barrel of gunpowder in his diligence, properly directed, than a portmanteau without an address on it; and he will not go out of his way, will not abate one whiff of his pipe, or one quarter of an hour of his two-hour dinner for money; whereas, for money, a Spaniard would kill, eat, or marry his grandmother: there is no justice in Spain, and never has been, because no judge can be found above corruption. War and women send great numbers of Frenchmen daily to the devil, whilst Jonathan goes the same way after dollars; and his activity differs as widely from the indolence of the Italian, as the passion of vengeance in the latter differs from the quiet endurance of the Chinese. With the Russian the leading characteristic is a devotional love of the emperor and brandy; whilst I apprehend the imperial institutions of Morocco rest principally upon cutting off men's heads. Now, the Scotch are all calculation, and the Irish are all imagination."

"Is it dhramin or prachin he is?" asked Mr. MacGallaher of Lady Sarah, "is he ravin, or is he Peter Wilkins the flyin man, come among us to hop into St. Patrick's shoes?"

"Whoever makes the imagination of the Irish his own," continued Mr. Wilkins, rising with his subject, "is made a present of their reason into the bargain, and he who can succeed in that will be their Odin, their Confucius, their Mahomet,—in short, their idol."

"I'd like to know would they pay him tithes?" said Mr. MacGallaher, with a wink that seemed to indicate that he considered the speaker was getting somewhat beyond his depth.

"Their attachment to their religion," continued Mr. Wilkins, "is because it is the religion of the imagination; it presents symbols visibly before their eyes, and enables them to embody principles which the Protestant service, that leaves devotion to shift for itself, fails in doing."

"Is he a hathen, or a metaphysician, or what?" asked Mr. MacGallaher. "Is it the Society for the Confusion of Useful Knowledge sent him here, or the governors of Bedlam?"

"An imaginary right to land that is imagined to have belonged to some imaginary ancestors of theirs, in apocryphal times, cannot be rooted out of the minds of the people to this day," said Mr. Wilkins.

"That's thue," said Mr. MacGallaher, who was well aware that there was a farmer in the neighbourhood, who considered him only an intruder on the lands of Ballymacgallaher, and who waited impatiently till the fulness of time should bring round the auspicious moment that would give the people 'their rights,' i. e. restore the forfeited lands to

the old septs :—"the man's not such a natural as I took him for."

"An imaginary duty to the dead is the cause of those scenes at wakes :—by the bye, I think I have hit upon a plan that will totally do away with them. The business that collects such crowds of them at fairs and markets is generally purely imaginary."

"See now," said Mr. MacGallagher, as the ladies left the room, "want a man's got a crotchet into his head, he'll make the whole universe sing the same tune. However, now the ladies are gone, we'll have the materials, that's one comfort :"—and Harry, upon Lord Ellesmere requesting Mr. MacGallagher to do the honours, as his health did not permit his sitting long at table, judged that the introduction of spirits brought on a crisis, upon which those not prepared to go the whole hog might retire, and did so accordingly.

"Well, that's the tay-drinkingest captain of foot I ever saw," said Mr. MacGallagher, recollecting his secession from the mess table in the middle of his own story about Mick Rooney and the mad bull.—"I'll lay a shilling he'll be coorting Lady Sarah soon, and small blame to him. Come, Mr. Wilkins, are you for wine or punch, Sir?"

"Pray, Mr. MacGallagher," returned that gentleman, watching the compounding of a huge tumbler of punch, "what do you consider the principal cause of drunkenness among the Irish?"

"Whiskey, to be sure," was the answer.

"No," said Mr. Wilkins, shaking his head physiologically.

"Is'nt it?" returned the other in some surprise; "may be," continued he, "it's imagination, we've all heard of boys that got as drunk as fiddlers, with *looking* at other men drinking."

"I think," said Mr. Wilkins, "that the predisposition to drink spirits arises from the fermentive process of a vegetable diet, and that rudely cooked, requiring to be checked. By the bye there is a most admirable pamphlet, I must get Lord Ellesmere to circulate here among the peasantry, upon the use of the potatoe."

"Is it tache them the use of the potatoe?" shouted Mr. MacGallagher, who always became more Irish, the more he was excited; "by dad you might as well set about tachin the boys the use of their mouths, ay, or the girls either, for that matter.—Och, well, never mind; did ever you hear tell of Mulroy the fiddler, Mr. Wilkins, he'd have been the lad for you,—he was a great hand at imagination,—he went and hanged himself for he said that he had no pace in life, he was surrounded by a legion of divils, for all the cats in the parish were callin' him by his name."

CHAPTER VIII.

Two days had Henry passed at Avonmore with great satisfaction to himself, though he had hardly been able to get out of doors all the time, for it rained with a pertinacity of which Irish clouds are alone capable. We do not dispute the qualities of the Scotch mists, but after all they are nothing but second hand Irish clouds; it is the South-west wind that brings them up and the Scotch never get them until the Irish have done with them; in fact, as we all know, whatever may be their pretensions to an antediluvian or pre-adamite antiquity, (Ossian, or more properly O'Shane, notwithstanding,) the Land of cakes was supplied with inhabitants originally from the first flower of the earth, as it now receives its clouds from the first gem of the sea, and a gem of the first water she is. Lord William was, as we have said, not seriously hurt, he was however confined to his room, and apparently his face out of sight, was his fall out of mind, for nobody seemed to feel it necessary to bestow a thought upon him, except Harry, who spent a great part of the day in his company, and as commonly some one or other of his family was there also, he became intimate with its several members much more rapidly than would have been the case under ordinary circumstances. In the rough yet monotonous and often lonely life of a soldier, busily employed doing nothing in country quarters, a few days sojourn in a country house, is often like an oasis in a desert, and so Henry felt it, for his state of mind was one at that time, that rendered the irksome routine duties, and the often not particularly interesting mess-table, peculiarly distasteful to him. There was something too in the society of the Ladies Fitzwarine, calculated peculiarly to attract him and to minister (imperfectly it is true) to a mind diseased. Differing as they did in character and disposition, they both possessed in a high degree, the true characteristics of lofty birth, an unembarrassed friendliness of manner that at once made him feel as if he had been intimate with them for years, a gentle but never failing dignity that commanded respect, without in the slightest degree approaching to the stiffness that represses cordiality, a sweet smile and a ready laugh, a modest but honest right-mindedness and directness of apprehension, the result of their mother's watchful care in early youth, that they should neither associate with, nor receive instruction from any person in whose good sense, combined with sound principles and the gift of inculcating them, she had not the fullest confidence.

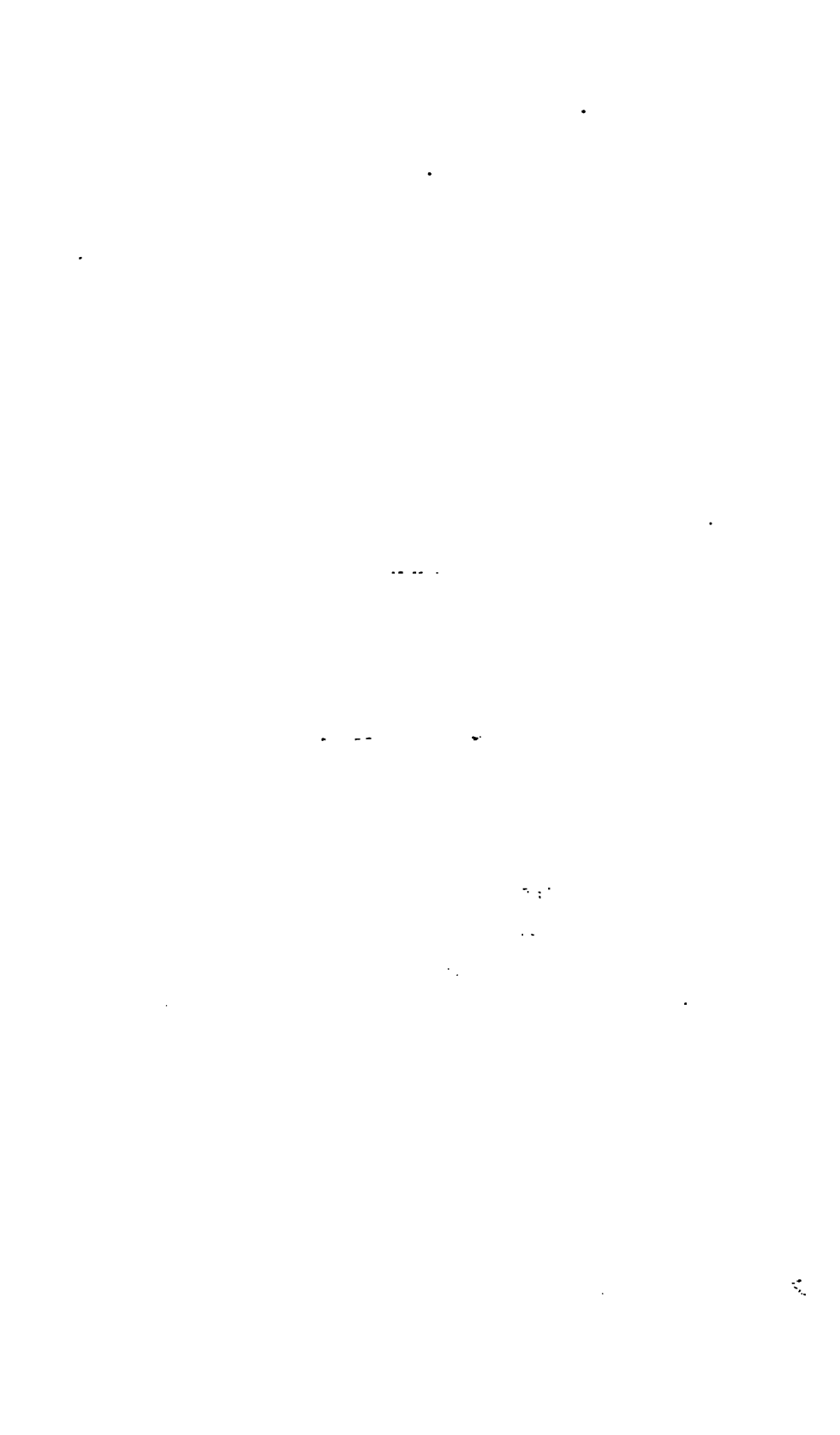
A deep seated and cherished desire to raise the condition, both moral and physical of those around her, was a marked characteristic of Lady Madelaine, and though the dark gulph of religious difference yawning between her and her father's Irish tenants impeded her progress at Avonmore, still her Sunday Schools, her Savings-banks, her kind interest in their affairs, and her ready assistance in their

if they were not duly appreciated when she was there, were
ly missed when she was away, and if the outline of the image
y she set before her eyes, was somewhat shadowy and incor-
ady Sarah filled it up most substantially with creature com-
r she descended on the estate, in a perfect snow-storm of
and flannel petticoats, she nearly introduced a pestilence by
the young women to wear shoes and stockings, which, as
e never properly dry, gave two-thirds of them colds and sore
a the first fortnight, whereupon, she half poisoned the country
drenching it with treacle and vinegar, which she imagined
poor people's complaints, and then in an attempt to shift the
the colds from her shoes and stockings, to the imperfect
their cottages, she bid fair to annihilate the neighbourhood.
ad all their windows glazed at her own expense, and nearly
l them. One of her peculiarities was a comic but good
d insight into character, the ridiculous side of which in all
hit with unerring certainty, and drew out with a mischievous
t; a little less disposition to satire, might perhaps have
a little more like an angel, but it would have spoiled her
as a woman, which is the article most in demand on earth;
a fairy queen of merry malice, whilst her sister was distin-
y a lofty delicacy, that judging from its own highmindedness,
t impute to any, motives or intentions that did not harmo-
its own purity, and by a calm sedate evenness of disposition
d more upon depth of feeling than upon impulse.

ere the sisters with whom Henry now passed a considerable part
ie, and it is to be observed, that his intercourse with them
interrupted by the other guests, for nearly all the gentlemen
ed immediately after breakfast, reappearing, as before
at dinner, and in the society of these fair creatures, he found
nsible and welcome relief to his mind. In other evils he
ive preferred solitude. Severe bodily pain he could have
endured with a gloomy fortitude. Death he could have
d, not, alas, with the resignation of a christian, but yet
calmness of a stoic. Heavy worldly misfortunes would
y nerved his mind and wound up his spirit to encounter
a danger and difficulty, his heart would have risen with
gency, as it had often done before, but the peculiar position
he was placed, loving, knowing that he was beloved and
d, for a reason that appeared to him unjust and absurd, yet
scientiousness only increased his regard for Clara, and em-
be reflection, that over the cause of his disappointment he
ntrol, for nothing on earth would have induced him to simu-
viction he did not feel, he was aware of the presence of a
h he could not have described, but which was most nearly
y the presence and conversation of those gentle sisters, who
e was unhappy they knew not why, and instinctively afforded
silent and unobtrusive sympathy more real soothing conso-
n the most elaborate form of words, which generally mean
effect less, could have bestowed.

The family party was now about to be increased, for the eldest son, the Earl de Creci, was daily expected. Lord de Creci, the only offspring of Lord Ellesmere's first marriage, was a man of a peculiar and reserved, if not absolutely gloomy character. His life, from his youth upwards, had been spent in solitary wanderings in different parts of the globe, for though, upon his coming of age, he had sat one session in the House of Commons, that assembly did not exactly meet his views. It was in the middle of the war, and the night he took his seat, one of the great patriots of the nation was to speak on the subject. The *patriot* arose, and with him, in the imagination of the young member, rose the forms of the mighty men of old; the patriot began to speak, and the vision fled before his words as from a spell, for the *English patriot* exulted in the carnage of Albhuera, the inconclusive character of that hard-won victory, the probability of defeat, should Soult take heart of grace and attack again; and so unequivocally manifested that his sympathies were with the enemies of his country, that Lord de Creci enquired whether the rest of the patriots were like this, and being answered, that the principal difference between this man and his brother patriots consisted in this, that he was a gentleman, and the most of the others were not,—applied to the crown for office, the only office that has no disappointed claimants in its conscience, (if there is such a thing as a conscience in office), viz. the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, and leaving the collective wisdom to its own eccentricities of patriotism embarked for the Mediterranean.

If a flying island or a floating mountain, were to appear in the Mediterranean, in the year of grace 1843, its motions, past, present, and projected, would not be more regularly reported, by the organs of the public opinion, to the fashionable and especially the unfashionable world, than those of an Earl. Indeed a commoner who now gives a nobleman a cast in his yacht, must make up his mind that his Lordship will have credit for being the owner of the craft, but in those days it was otherwise, the daily press had not flung its net work of communication over the globe, our 'esteemed correspondent' ran a chance of being hanged for a spy, and a question too many would commute the tree of knowledge into the nearest oak. Algiers had its fleet of corsairs in full activity, and the seas swarmed with those quaker-pirates, the privateers; a good sized sloop of war was considered a very good way of sending a letter, and Lord de Creci, unheeded and unwatched, almost disappeared for some time. His bankers had orders to answer no questions, save and except that he was still alive. He himself was not given to correspondence, and months and months elapsed, without his own family ever hearing from him, or having the slightest idea where he was or where he was likely to be. Indeed at one period, towards the close of the war, his absence and silence were so protracted, that it was surmised that he had found his way into a French prison, and when, at the termination of hostilities and release of the prisoners, still there were no tidings of Lord de Creci, the anxiety of his father became insupportable. Everywhere enquiries were made for him, and everywhere in vain; he had been seen in different parts in





the Mediterranean, but in none for several years, and the worst fears of his family were well nigh realised, when a traveller in the east brought home a valuable pocket chronometer, a sextant, and a Dolland's telescope, which he had found attached to a human skeleton in a lonely glen in Syria. It was evident that these must have belonged to some European of the higher classes, and the misgivings of his family were converted almost into certainty, when the maker of the sextant declared, and proved by his books, that he had sold the instrument bearing the same number to Lord de Creci.

The Marquis had absolutely ordered mourning, when, on a foggy January evening in 1817, the family as it chanced being in town, a housemaid who had been enacting *Thisbe* with a neighbouring baker's apprentice, through the area railings in Grosvenor Square, suddenly broke from her *Pyramus* in an extacy of dismay, and electrified the basement floor and its inmates, by declaring that the ghost of Lord de Creci had just descended from a hackney coach at the door, and was paying his fare from the White Horse Cellar. Death on the pale horse could not have created more sensation, and the next minute a double rap from above seemed to confirm her statement in a voice of thunder. The most valiant footmen paused and hesitated; another peal announced that the Earl's ghost by no means intended to enter through the keyhole, as a commoner's or even a younger son's might be expected to do, the door must be answered, if Old Nick himself was knocking, and up they went, two men, who considered themselves in the light of what the French troops call '*enfants perdus*,' in advance, two more to support, the groom of the chambers in reserve, and all the women of the establishment peeping up by the back stairs, to begin screeching when the proper time arrived. The lights burned not blue, they burned brown, for the oil was bad; the door was opened and the fog came in, but it did not smell of sulphur, and with it in walked Lord de Creci and the hackney coachman with his portmanteaus. His Lordship's identity was unquestionable, and he seemed to have no doubt of it himself, for he walked in as unconcernedly as if he had just come from attending a meeting at Exeter Hall, about the education of the people or the health of the poor, or some such unimportant matter, the only thing that appeared to partake of the supernatural in the whole scene, being that the coachman was content with his fare.

Lord Ellesmere could hardly recognize his son in the care-worn weather-beaten object that stood before him. Though only seven and twenty, a premature old age seemed to have fallen upon him, and his character, manners, and habits, had undergone a complete change. In his early youth, he had often given his father uneasiness, from a supposed want of steadiness in his character. Hasty, impetuous, generous, and full of warm and springing feelings, the great object of his life had been excitement, and a deep admiration of the beauty of truth, that has been impressed on our mind by the oratory and practice of Mr. Daniel O'Connell, compels us to declare, at the risk of ruining his character in the eyes of the country gentlemen, that in the field, he was thinking a great deal more of his fences than of how the hounds were working. '*Amicus equus, amicus canis, sed magis amica*

veritas.' Partridge shooting he considered slow, pheasants were to him about as attractive as cold veal or its equivalent, but mile after mile of moor rolled away unheeded under his feet in pursuit of grouse, and he never appeared so thoroughly excited, as when he was exploring lonely woodland in search of woodcock.

He had more than once distinguished himself pugilistically in street combats, which seemed a prevailing epidemic among the young aristocracy of his day, corresponding to Britannia metal tournaments, going to balls in plate armour, assaulting policemen, becoming bankrupts, and the other similar recreations of the children of the nobility of the present time; and he might have possibly become a gambler, had he not, fortunately for him, been entrusted with the secret of an infallible system of winning at Rouge et noir, in the attempt to put which in practice, he received a lesson that he never forgot for the rest of his life, having lost five thousand seven hundred pounds in one night, as is commonly the practical working of such systems, which look much better on paper than on cards.

All this was however changed. It cannot be said that he was morose, for all the better and kinder feelings of his nature remained unimpaired, but they were veiled by a gloomy reserve that none could penetrate. With respect to his travels and adventures he was silent, he allowed of no questions on those subjects, and whenever any one approached the forbidden ground, his sarcastic answers soon made the questioner feel that he had better leave him alone. With this he seemed to be content, for though possessing great powers of sarcasm, he never seemed inclined to give pain or to use them at all unless in self defence, and it was remarkable that, whilst whatever had happened to him appeared to have withered his heart into indifference about himself, he still retained a consideration for others, that whilst it prevented his peculiarities rendering him an object of dislike to his equals, attached his inferiors and dependants to him in a very high degree.

Lord de Creci's arrival at Avonmore Castle was an event that was the cause of no small sensation in the neighbourhood; he had often visited the country, but had on all those occasions come without notice, slept but one night in the Castle, and then run on to a shooting lodge the Marquis possessed about twenty miles off, where the woods were well known for the best cock-shooting in Ireland, and after a few days shooting disappeared as he came, taking care of the family interest by presents of cocks, to an extent that shewed that his gun was no joke in the woods, but rarely letting himself be visible. Now, however, he was coming down to receive company at Avonmore, and the influx of the neighbours was proportionate to the dignity, that is to say, to the rarity of the occasion, to his great horror; more especially as some of the elder ladies whom he might expect to encounter, whose memory had survived their discretion, thought it necessary to brush up the aforesaid memory and recall their recollection of his Lordship as a curly headed mischievous monkey about the time of the Union, and tell him that he was very much improved since that time, as well he might be, having had a quarter of a century and more to devote to that

laudable object. Others, who did not look upon time with such optimist eyes remarked that he was a good deal older. One old lady indulged in the pleasure of memory by instituting divers comparisons between him and certain cotemporaries, most of whom had by this time very bloated faces and very red noses; whilst another indulged in the pleasures of Hope, for she tried to persuade him to give her an account of his past life and adventures. She might just as well have tried to draw blood from a stone—but between them all they drove him half frantic in the first four and twenty hours, though a certain imperturbable self-command carried him safely through the day without materially damaging the Avonmore interest in the county; sometimes, it is true, an expression of weariness, a compression of the lip, a flashing of the eye, or even a sneer, would mark his annoyance at some peculiarly abominable piece of misplaced civility or unwelcome recollection, but his words were courteous; he knew that all was well intended, and though he probably mentally consigned them to the place whither such intentions are supposed to go, he suffered them to find their own way, and every body said that his Lordship was very affable, and were exceedingly afraid of him nevertheless.

Henry's first introduction to this redoubted personage took place in Lord William's room, where he was sitting, whither the Earl immediately on his arrival at Avonmore proceeded, for rumour had magnified Lord William's accident, and what was called a 'spill' on the race course of Ballymacdaniel, had by the time it reached London, swelled to a disjointed version of broken collar bone, smashed ribs, with legs and arms to correspond. He found his brother a great deal better, indeed so near recovered that he merely kept his room to keep himself out of harm's way, for what is oinotechnically termed a 'wet week' had set in at Avonmore, that is to say, the party had been carefully composed of the mighty men of the days of old, who when they said that they did not like to attack their second magnum of claret without assistance, meant the assistance of a bottle of sherry.

Picked men they were after the fashion of the Scandinavian mythology (which they admired extremely for its posthumous jollifications) for they were literally chosen by the Valkyrs or choosers of the slain, seeing that the mode of life killed off all the weak ones before they were five and twenty, and the survivors seemed to bear charmed lives, not indeed exactly like the victim of Kehama, for their lives were not charmed from the 'weapons of strife,' inasmuch as some of them had given occasion for the customary coroner's verdict of the time and place in affairs of honour,—'We find that the deceased came by his death by a pistol bullet,'—though in other respects there was some analogy. They did not indeed carry a fire in their brain, but they carried something that looked very like a fire put in front of it, and the other lines

And water shall hear me,—
And know thee and fly thee,

applied to them strictly, and they took very good care that it should. It was the policy of Lord Ellesmere to collect these heroes of the bottle together—first, because it disposed of the whole lot in one lump; and

secondly, because it naturally suited these congenial souls to moisten their clay together, without let or hindrance from the intrusion of sober men ; whose presence is an eyesore the moment objects begin to multiply and candles to dance. A large party had arrived the same morning as Lord de Creci, and his Lordship, though much discomfited thereby, had magnanimously resolved to be as agreeable as possible to them all, which he effected by breakfasting and spending the morning in his own room, riding by himself in the afternoon once that it did not rain, meeting his guests at 7 P.M. leaving the table before they commenced their orgies in earnest, and seeing no more of them that evening, for circumstances generally prevented their appearance in the drawing room. On the occasion Henry first encountered Lord de Creci, in Lord William's bed-room, the instant he saw him, it struck him that he had seen him, or at all events somebody like him before, though how, where or when, he could not recollect.

"What do you think of our wild West, Mr. Mowbray," said the Earl ; "after your wild East, and its wild sports, all this must be somewhat tame ; we have not even still hunting now to enliven your nights."

"Tame perhaps they are," returned Henry, "for in most of the wild sports of the East, that I saw, the game was man."

"And the reciprocity was not Irish," said the Earl.

"Not the least, we lost men in every sort of manner, sickness, want, exposure, fire, and sword ; the brunt of every attack pretty well fell upon us, for the sepoys did not much like the looks of the Burmese, and we generally had to head the columns."

"You met Horton there, did you not ?" said Lord William.

"Indeed I did, and I am under the greatest obligations to him ; I was in his boat after I was wounded, and nothing could exceed his kindness to me : I do believe I should have lost my leg, if not my life, if it had not been for him."

"Ha !" said the Earl, with a peculiar expression, "he is rather—odd !"

"We did not trouble our heads much about oddities there," said Harry ; "a quick eye, a stout heart, and a ready hand, were the things most in requisition then, and all these he possessed."

"He is very odd," repeated the Earl, more as if he were speaking to himself, than addressing Harry.

"He certainly had one peculiarity that used to puzzle me, taken as it was in connection with his kindness to me, and that was," here he hesitated for a moment, "a singular pleasure in seeing mischief done, or people getting into scrapes."

"Ha !" said the Earl, "he's gone to India now."

"De Creci," said Lord William, "that Slievenamore wood is as full of cocks as it can hold."

"That is fortunate," said his brother, "I hope the lodge is a little more habitable ; the last time I was there the *batterie de cuisine*, consisted of a potatoe pot and a gridiron."

"Its all right now," returned Lord William.

"Are you inclined to try a day in the woods, Mr. Mowbray ?" asked the Earl.

"Nothing would give me more pleasure," returned Harry.

"We'll see about arranging it; I suppose you will join our riding party to-day," said his Lordship as he took his departure.

"Why, Mowbray," said Lord William, "you have made a conquest of De Creci; I never heard him half so civil to any one at a first interview before."

"I cannot make out what it is in his countenance that is so familiar to me," said Harry, musingly; "I do not recollect having ever seen him before, and yet, still I fancy that I know his face."

"Perhaps he took part in the Burmese war," said Lord William laughing, "we never know where he is or what he is doing; at this moment he may be engaged in a piratical project, for he is building a slapping large schooner that is to be armed to the teeth; she is to carry several guns, and I believe hands enough to fight them. I shall see you when you come in from riding."

"Now, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Sarah as they rode out, "you must ride with me to-day, for I have some designs of extracting amusement from Mr. Fitzgerald, for you must know that yesterday he told Madelaine, that he had no higher idea of what he called happiness in this world, than a competence with a woman,—and then he corrected himself and said a lady that loved and could understand him, and he accompanied this with a look that I verily believe was intended to convey to her that she was that 'lady.'"

Henry looked back involuntarily at the gentleman, who was certainly somewhat a singular figure. He was a slightly built man, apparently about six and twenty, his naturally finniken figure being further minimised by being pinched in by something that he probably called a belt, but which, if need were, would have done as well as any pair of stays that ever issued from a milliner's shop; his coat was green, his waistcoat yellow, and his trousers sky blue: a combination of colours more striking than picturesque. His horse was a lengthy scraggy weed, with its tail carefully trimmed to resemble that of a race-horse, from which the animal itself differed only in blood, bone, pace, bottom, and action, his stirrups were of brass and hung so low that he could hardly get his feet into them, his many coloured stock was decorated with a large Irish diamond pin, and his whole appearance and manners had the restlessness and uneasiness that commonly accompany and indicate untenable pretensions.

"What did Lady Madelaine think of it?" said Henry.

"She was thunderstruck at the man's impertinence, but she hardly knew what to say; here she comes, she wants to get rid of him, but we will not let her, let us take a canter,"—and away went her Ladyship at what young ladies call a canter, and the rest of the world a full gallop, pursued by Lady Madelaine, who was not without good reason for wishing to break up her *tête à tête* with Mr. Fitzgerald, for that gentleman had all of a sudden become very poetical, which we all know is very alarming.

"I wish I were alone in a desert solitchude," said he, "with none but *one*, and that a fair spirit, so that I might forget the world and its inhabitants, and think of none but her." Whence he got this passage it is probably not necessary to particularise, whether his version of it

is an improvement on the original is a matter of taste, Lady Madelaine who admired Byron, thought not, but at that moment a vision out of the Tempest arose before her eyes, and the recollection of Miranda and Caliban forced itself irresistibly on her mind; so as she did not exactly know what was to come next, she put her horse into a canter to join her sister and Henry, trusting to find safety in the multitude of listeners, a manœuvre which the mischievous young lady instantly defeated. The horses however all got excited, and immediately after they started, Mr. Fitzgerald's Rosinante gave a plunge that fairly shook him out of his brazen stirrups, took the bit in its teeth, threw up its head in the air, and ran away. He passed Henry and Lady Sarah like lightning, with a most piteous expression of dismay in his countenance, which threw the young lady into convulsions of laughter. But bad as this was his troubles were only beginning, for Mr. Fitzgerald, unlike the great bulk of his class, was a very indifferent horseman. The party, though they had left the pleasure grounds immediately about the house had not quitted the demesne, they were still on the grass, and the horse restrained by no path, ran directly at a stone wall, something about four feet high, that stretched for a long way in front of him. On this wall was a post, on the post was a board, and on the board was inscribed in characters of ominous size

BEWARE THE BULL.

Nothing on earth could have given Mr. Fitzgerald greater pleasure at this instant than to have complied with this injunction, impressive in itself, and rendered still more so by the animal alluded to seeming to repeat it, for the roar with which he greeted the advancing cavalier seemed to say "beware the bull," as distinctly as if it were articulated. The horse however could not read and would not hear; the fence though pretty stiff, was by no means impracticable to an animal that had been indebted to its jumping for its daily food a great part of its life, and the next minute Mr. Fitzgerald was in the field clinging to his horse's neck on which he had been thrown by the leap, and was instantly charged by the savage occupier. Even Lady Sarah's laughter diminished as she saw that Mr. Fitzgerald was really in some danger; but Lady Madelaine rode up with an expression of the most intense anxiety in her countenance, for, provoked as she naturally and reasonably was at the absurdity of his conduct, she felt that though she would not have been very sorry to have seen him ducked in a pond or rolled in the mud, still the punishment appropriate to his presumption was not being gored to death.

In a short time, however, it appeared that no such catastrophe need be apprehended, Mr. Fitzgerald had regained his seat, and in some degree steadied himself there by inserting one of his feet in a stirrup leather, and his horse, though slow for a horse was fast for a cow, and had no great difficulty in leaving its present pursuer behind. He could not, however, get away, all that he could do was to gallop round the field, and how long this might have continued it is impossible to say, for no persuasions of Mr. Fitzgerald could induce the horse to face the wall again, nor indeed did he himself seem to like the idea of another leap much.





"I shall certainly die of laughter," said Lady Sarah.

"Really I cannot see anything in Mr. Fitzgerald's danger that is laughable," said Lady Madelaine reproachfully, "I do not know how he is to be saved now?"

"I cannot see anything in Mr. Fitzgerald that is *not* laughable," retorted Lady Sarah, "but then to be sure he is no admirer of mine," and the laugh with which this was said was so irresistible, that even her graver and more considerate sister could not help joining in it. Lord de Creci who had ridden rather behind the others, and not uttered one syllable since they had left the house, now looked at Henry with a sardonic smile and said,

"The horse *will* not face the wall, and the man *darè* not." ^x

"That is just how it is," returned Mowbray; "but we must get him out, for if his horse comes down he'll be killed."

"Oh! do make haste, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Madelaine; "the poor man will be killed before our eyes."

"Oh! do make haste, Mr. Mowbray, for Madelaine's sake," said the incorrigible Lady Sarah.

"Our best plan," said Mowbray, addressing Lord de Creci, "will be this, I'll go into the field and take the brute off him, if you will ride to that gate, and open it so as to let him through whilst the beast is busy with me, and then I can come out over the wall."

"I believe it is our best plan, Mr. Mowbray," said the Earl, and it was immediately put into execution and successfully; Mr. Fitzgerald being released from his imprisonment with hard labour, and Henry a bold rider on a stout horse, having no difficulty in persuading his steed to take the fence.

"How prettily Mr. Mowbray's horse leaps," said Lady Sarah.

"How nobly Mr. Mowbray ventures himself to save even Mr. Fitzgerald," said Lady Madelaine.

"Oh! Lady Madelaine, if you knew what I'm undergoing for your sake," muttered Mr. Fitzgerald as he drew nigh; though probably he alone could have explained the connection between his adventure and Lady Madelaine. But when he came close up, a sight presented itself that instantly drove all recollection of his danger from all their minds. Without troubling her head about what she was saying or to whom she was speaking, Lady Madelaine had said the day before that she thought dark eyebrows gave an air of command to a man's countenance.

Many a shaft at random sent
Finds mark the archer little meant.

The violent exercise of the last five minutes had thrown Mr. Fitzgerald into a profuse perspiration, and as he rode up, a black stream slowly gliding down from the corner of each eyebrow shewed too plainly that burnt cork, lamp black, or some other substance of the kind applied to his eyebrows formed part of the munitions of war wherewith he laid siege to Lady Madelaine's heart.

This was too much for either of them, they cantered off in a paroxysm of laughter, and even the grave Earl smiled when he saw Mr. Fitzgerald, utterly unconscious of the tell tale stains, urging his blown steed to overtake them. Before, however, Harry rejoined the ladies, Lord de

Creci told him that he had ordered the lodge at Slievenamore to be ready by the day after to-morrow, and they agreed upon starting after luncheon, and shooting the next two days. His Lordship for some reason or other, had evidently taken a great fancy to our hero, and his good opinion of him had manifestly been increased by the resource and ready courage he had exhibited in extricating Mr. Fitzgerald from his perilous situation.

CHAPTER IX.

It was about four o'clock in the day, that Lord de Creci and Henry came within sight of the shooting lodge of Slievenamore. The road for about twenty miles had led over a dreary bog, but as it approached the sea, it gradually assumed a sort of savage picturesqueness; huge, jagged, rugged rocks, rose abruptly close to it, as it entered the gorge of a mountain pass, on each side of which, wherever the fences were in repair, a thick growth of young coppice shewed that here, as well as generally over Ireland, fencing sufficient to ensure the exclusion of cattle, was alone wanting to restore the forests with which it had been covered of old; and when finally they rounded the last corner, and came in sight of the lodge, a scene of singular beauty presented itself.

The lodge was situated upon an estuary, winding round a narrow peninsula for a distance of nearly ten miles, but rarely exceeding a mile in breadth, and opposite the house which was close to the water's edge, little more than half that width. The woods that were to be the scene of their next morning's sport, covered that part of the peninsula that was sheltered from the westerly winds, that commonly prevail on that coast, and even in mid-winter derived a singular aspect of cheerfulness from the same cause that attracted the multitude of woodcocks with which they abounded, viz. a profusion of magnificent hollies and other evergreens. At the point where they stood, they saw on the right hand the inlet, more like a narrow lake, than an arm of the sea, for its entrance was not visible, and it had the appearance of being entirely land-locked; whilst on the left hand, the swell unchecked for three thousand miles, surged slowly in with a lazy heavy rolling, that by no means prepared the eye for the sudden rush and crash of the breaking wave, and the glittering column of white spray flung up high in the air with a hoarse roar, as it encountered the rocks. To the westward, the sky was a species of hazy purple, resembling black grapes with the bloom upon them, through whose gloomy curtain, a red fiery streak would occasionally shew itself close to the horizon, as if to announce that there was a sun setting behind it. A shoal of fishing boats were standing in, steering for a small port, about six miles to the northward, as if they did not like the look of the weather, and it is no slight matter that drives the hardy hookers of the west into port. It is astro-

nishing, to look at their rude build and ruder rig, what weather they make, how close they keep to the wind, and what a faculty they have for actually throwing off a sea ; to the southward a solitary ship was gliding along rapidly in an easterly direction, she had just taken in her studding sails, and though her colours were not distinguishable, the rake of her masts and ship-shape appearance of her rigging, told pretty clearly that the 'stars and stripes' fluttered at her peak. ** Hurrah for the*

"Suppose we walk the rest of the way, now that we have come to a point that leaves no temptation to hurry, and every inducement to linger. I never see these gigantic rocks without feeling a sort of wish to stand on the summit of the highest of them, a wish that I often think is childish, but that has survived my childhood," said Lord de Creci, with a more cheerful voice, and a brighter eye than usual ; pointing to the little rustic building, that was to be the end of their journey, "yonder is the lodge, and the dogs will be better for a scamper,"—and they dismounted, sending on the empty dog cart in charge of the groom to announce their arrival to Lord de Creci's right hand man, who had already taken possession of the lodge, a thorough bred and thorough-going traveller's servant by land or sea ; who could dress an Earl, or a horse, or a leg of mutton, or a gunshot wound ; bleed, ride, or drive, hand, reef, or steer, make a bed or a saddle, break horses, and sell them, clean fire-arms and use them, and in short do anything, and everything, and as much more as could be expected. At this particular moment he was at fault, for he was trying to persuade the old Irish woman who had charge of the lodge, that he had done nothing astonishing or to be ashamed of, by carrying up a bucketful of salt water from the loch, which she alleged was girl's work, that no decent man would think of, and when he assured her that he had seen a great many thousand men in Paris, and elsewhere, who did nothing else but carry water about ; she settled that matter in her own mind, by deciding that they must be "in throuble," i. e. convicts. *Whit
+
Bliss*

The two gentlemen paused for a moment to gaze upon the Atlantic : "How strangely and strongly one's early affection for the sea clings to one," observed Henry ; "I was brought up by the side of the sea in an old castle, that has been in my family for centuries, and I never see the sea, but it seems to carry comfort on its face."

"It carries pirates and slaves," said the Earl, his customary gloomy expression returning.

"Well, I suppose it may be misapplied as well as everything else," returned Henry, smiling, "but to me it is always like an old friend."

"Friend or foe, I shall trust myself to it nevertheless in a few months, when the Arab is ready for sea," replied Lord de Creci ; "I have no great taste for paddling about the Solent."

"You arm her heavily, do you not ?" asked Henry.

"Yea," was the answer, "a long twelve on a slide, and four six pound carronades. It is a heavy battery for a yacht, but it really is not safe to trust oneself among those Greek islands unless well armed, for without agreeing with my friend Byron that patriotism is the mother of piracy, as when he says,

"His country's wrongs and his despair to save her,
Had stung him from a slave to an enslaver,"

it certainly is a fact that piracy is as fashionable a profession there now as it was in the most heroic times. They might be very troublesome to an unarmed vessel too, though when they see what sailors call a long tom, it is up helm and away as fast as they can. I wonder what that man can want there, do you see him, he has been hovering about us for some time."

"In Greece," said Henry, with a laugh, "I suppose you would honour him with some little mark of attention, such as a carbine shot or that sort of thing."

The man who had indeed followed them for some time, seeing himself observed, now came up, as if to address them, but having cast a cautious glance round, his heart apparently failed him, and he contented himself with the question which the national modesty (its answer being of the least possible value to himself) causes every Irishman to address to a stranger. "Will your Lordship be pleased to tell me what o'clock it is," and having got the desired information he walked away.

"He wants something, poor fellow," said Lord de Creci, and at this moment, the expression that had puzzled Henry so much at their first interview returned to his countenance, an expression that reminded him of some passage of his former life, though what that might be he could not remember. "However, he knows where to find us, we shall probably see more of him. He will probably appear after dinner when his imagination will picture us in a paradise of Sneyd's claret, ready to grant any favour he can ask. Well, here we are at the lodge;" where, simple as the accommodation was, an experienced traveller and an old soldier had no difficulty in making themselves comfortable.

"Now," said Mr. Fritz Bluthenbaum, the Earl's factotum, to himself, about three hours after the arrival of the two gentlemen at Slievenamore, "I have seen my Lord and the Captain fed and claretted, the horses bedded up for the night, and the dogs tied up so that it is all righted; I must inspect the arms."

It must be observed, that the wandering life which Lord de Creci had led since Mr. Bluthenbaum had entered his service, so often had required the protection of fire-arms that he considered any thing of the sort in the light of a weapon of defence rather than as of an implement of sport, and the word "gun" to his mind would have conveyed the idea of a long twelve pounder, or a ship's carronade at the least, to say nothing of his having been brought up as a soldier. His life had been an eventful one. He was by birth a French subject, but being an Alsatian was in point of fact in character, ideas, disposition, and language, as much a German as if he had never stirred ten miles from the banks of the Elbe. However, choosing a military life, he of course served under the banners of the country of which he was by birth a subject, or rather to employ the Gallic nickname, a citizen, and at the age of fifteen, the rattle of the drum he carried had answered cheerily to the thunder of Austrian artillery and musketry at the bridge of Arcola, where he was wounded. He subsequently saw turban and horse-tail, lance and scimitar, the Mameluke and his charger go down like grass before the scythe, under the sustained fire

of the French squares within sight of the Pyramids, and escaping the manifold perils of Egyptian warfare, had returned in time to take part in the great struggle that introduced the infancy of this dearly beloved and much bepraised age of ours, to the favourable notice of the world, the enlightened nineteenth century brought forth in convulsions and baptized in blood. He saw three emperors debate the mastery of Europe, when the sun of Austerlitz rose upon the scene of fire and ice of that fatal day, and when that sun *set*, and he saw the double headed eagle trusting more to its wings than to its beak or talons, and the northern bear shuffling away with a clumsy alacrity, his voice joined loud and clear in the cheers that greeted the terrible close of the Dreikaiserschlacht. In the year following, he saw the Emperor Napoleon put his own shoulder to the wheel of a gun that had stuck in a deep narrow cross-road, and soon afterwards, being in front of the French army with the skirmishers, he saw a Prussian soldier, at the battle of Jena receive six strokes of a cane (under fire), for having his shoulder straps unbuttoned, the results of which different systems conducted him to Berlin. He afterwards went to the Peninsula, when he made the acquaintance of the British troops, and being subsequently draughted for the Russian expedition, closed his military career in the arms of the Cossacks on the banks of the Beresina.

The Cossacks did not eat him, for in the village where they caught him they found some bags of tallow, which they preferred, and having eat them they proceeded to make a soup of the sacks, a boot-full of which, seasoned with gunpowder, that they considerably gave their perishing captive, revived him; and finally their kind attentions so far restored him as to enable him to make the journey to Siberia with as much comfort to himself as circumstances admitted of, in which retirement he remained several years, until what we may venture to call his many-sided-up-to-any-thing-ness, attracted the notice of a Russian brigadier, who gave the lieutenant-general commanding two pound ten to wink at his carrying him away as a servant. With his new master he saw a good deal of rough and ready service between the Black Sea and the Caspian, and finally, attending him on a journey to Ems, closed his eyes, and saw him decently interred on the banks of the Lahn, the general having graduated in the regular manner through roulette, rouge et noir, ruin and prussic acid. Almost immediately after this he had entered Lord de Creci's service, to whom he was invaluable; first, as a first-rate travelling servant in any country, or under any circumstances, secondly, for a peculiarity of language and ideas which amused the Earl exceedingly. He spoke French and German perfectly, Italian, Spanish, and Russian tolerably fluently, though not, perhaps, correctly; had a smattering of Persian and Greek, and divers Oriental dialects, and a knowledge of English, which, though sufficient for all practical purposes, often extracted a smile from his master, when nothing else could; for he had taught himself English from books and a dictionary, in the wilds of Siberia, and never could unlearn what he had learned; so that, between the use of words and phrases, which though themselves expressing what they wanted, were still out of place in the circumstances under which he used them; the introduction of foreign

idioms, and the confusion of synonymes, his speech was often a strange jargon, in which he was accustomed to tell all manner of anecdotes of the adventures of his variegated life. He had just opened Lord de Creci's gun-case, when his attention was excited by a tap at the window, and opening the shutter, he saw a man standing outside, making signs that he wanted to speak to him.

"I want to spake to my Lord, directly," said the man.

"Why go you not round to the porte?" asked Bluthenbaum.

"Faith, I'm thinkin its at the claret I'll find him," said the man; "sorrow the dhrop of port he'd touch."

"Go to the door," said the other.

"Whisht, now," said the man, "you must let me see the Earl unknownst to the ould woman."

"How?"

"Ould Misthress O'Halloran mustn't know that I have seen him for fear she'd sell the pass on me."

"*Qu'est que cela veut dire*," muttered the valet: "sell the pass. The lieutenant-general did sell a passport for me to my first master; but that was good for me."

"Arrah, now let me in Mr. Bloodybones, there's life and death dependin on it, make haste now."

Fritz complied, and having taken every precaution to prevent Mrs. O'Halloran being aware that the strange visitor had had an interview with the Earl, he ushered him into the dining room. In about twenty minutes the bell was rung, the peasant was dismissed with the same caution as he had been introduced, the guns were taken out and prepared for immediate service, and the heart of the worthy and warlike Bluthenbaum gladdened by the intelligence that he was to take part in a pitched battle that very night. A short consultation was held, in which it was resolved, that for *very* close quarters, shot would be quite as effective as ball; the groom was dispatched with a letter to the officer in command of the police at the nearest station, which, however, was unhappily at a considerable distance, and by eight o'clock, Lord de Creci, Mowbray, and Bluthenbaum, armed to the teeth, were rapidly traversing the hills under the guidance of an urchin that 'belonged' to Mrs. O'Halloran, who trotted along before them in high spirits, impressed with a full conviction that his Lordship and the Captain were engaged in a smuggling expedition. Their object was very different.

CHAPTER X.

IT was a roughish December night that found Lord de Creci and Henry thus armed, and ready for battle, traversing the solitudes of those wild mountains, and Fritz's somewhat pedantic proposition of forming an advance and rearguard, with flanking parties, having been overruled upon grounds partly arithmetical, they moved in a compact body, making about three miles (Irish) an hour. For some time they proceeded in silence, which was at last broken by Lord de Creci.

"What a frightful state of things this is," said he; "these murders are becoming daily more frequent, and yet it does not seem that any way has been devised to meet the evil, this system of intimidation lockjaws the whole progress of improvement, and yet this country is capable of anything: it might be a perfect paradise if the laws were administered."

"There is force enough in Ireland to cause the laws to be administered," remarked Henry. "There is no country in the world where the system of communication by roads is so complete, and *that* ought to give great facility to the capture of offenders. They say that in Italy nothing destroys the brigandage of a country like making roads through it."

"It is very true," said Lord De Creci, "wherever you have roads, you can effect cavalry surprises."

"Nothing can be more effective than the police," said Henry, "and they are backed by a numerous and efficient army."

"True," said Lord de Creci, "there is force enough, but it is misapplied; it does not perform the service that its own strength would enable it to effect, and it never will, until the government goes back to the system of Alfred, the common law of England, and make the neighbourhood responsible for the crimes committed in it."

"I hear they tried that about the illicit distillation, and it failed," said Harry.

"It failed," said the Earl, "because it was based on false principles; the punishment of the fine levied on the barony fell upon the landowner, who had nothing to say to the crime, whilst the real criminals escaped altogether. Imagine the effect likely to be produced by charging the Duke of Devonshire in Piccadilly, or Lord Bloomfield in Sweden some hundreds of pounds for an offence committed by some one else in Munster? If they had charged every house in the barony five shillings, and enforced the payment, distrained instantly, it might have had some effect, but in these cases, they will never put a stop to these murders until they make the *persons* and property of the surrounding peasantry responsible for the murders that are perpetrated by and with their connivance and assistance, and that could not take place otherwise. It is very true that many of them are deterred from assisting the execution of justice, by the fear of the vengeance of the terry-alts, but the well-disposed people of this country out-number the terry-alts by twenty to one. Let a government but have the courage to

make the vengeance of the law more terrible than the vengeance of the terry-alts, the bulk of the people will side with the law, and when once there is a certainty of the law being administered, if the terry-alts venture to try conclusions with it, the people will turn on the terry-alts and tear them to pieces."

At this moment their guide, who had already several times shewn a disposition to receive further instructions, came up, and, with a significant wink, said, "Your Lordship will want to go by the say way I'll engage."

"Is that our best way," asked the Earl.

"Faith it is, my lord, sure it's the only way *there*. But," here he hesitated a moment, and scratched his head, "if I might make so bould to ask, what's the use of them guns at all? Sure you might see all the fun without as much as a bit of blackthorn in your hand. I'll go bail our boys wouldn't let the furrenners hurt yez, and by the same token," with a sly look at Harry, "the captain there will tell you that some of them boys like seein a gun in their own hands."

"I fancy that fellow has had enough of that sort of thing," replied Harry, with a laugh.

"Divil mend him," answered the boy, "but there'll be a couple of hundred at this job, they'll be too sthrong for yez. Only lave the guns behind yez and they wont hurt a hair of your head."

"They may of somebody else's," said Harry.

"Never fear, captain," said the boy, with an exulting grin, "sure the polis is twenty miles off at Ballymena bay this blessed minnit, lookin out for a cargo that's to be run there. Much good may it do them, but your lardship knows best."

"He's talking about the revenue police; they have nothing to say to this matter," said Harry to Lord de Creci, but the earl was absorbed in a fit of gloomy meditation, and made no answer.

"This seems a more serious matter than we bargained for," said he at length; "the whole country side must be in a conspiracy against this poor man; we shall have some difficulty."

"Time enough to give in when we're beat," was the pithy reply.

"Steel to the backbone," muttered the Earl, fixing his large penetrating eye for an instant, with an expression of approval, upon Henry's resolute countenance. "Yes," said he aloud, "many a battle and many a kingdom has that maxim won before now; many a gallant man has that maxim carried through the very jaws of destruction, and I daresay it will carry us over this night, but we must be cautious and make dispositions that may enable us to meet such odds as these."

"We shall see about that when we get to the spot, and can see the construction of the house," answered Harry. "The nature of our defence must depend upon that you know, and their numbers are just as likely to tell against them as for them; if they shew many men they must expect many casualties, and one man shot dead frightens a hundred just as much as it does ten."

Hitherto their course had laid upon a road which, though comparatively deserted, was still practicable for carts, and evidently occasionally traversed by them, but now their guide struck off into a little narrow track, which would have been hardly visible had not the moon risen,

and although angry grey streaks of drifting clouds hurried rapidly past and occasionally obscured her, still she gave light enough for them to discern objects pretty distinctly, and the path he had chosen, after traversing about a mile of open heath, once more brought them within hearing of the sea; not, indeed, the heavy and somewhat regular booming of the Atlantic, but a more confused sound without intermission, as if the waves were rippling up, shattered and broken, into a deep inlet. Here the path suddenly dipped, and descending rapidly through a stunted coppice, conducted them to a point where they again got a sight of the water that lay gleaming at their feet. The scene was singularly wild and lonely, the sea itself was not visible from the dark glen in which they stood, and Harry looked somewhat uneasily at his companion, but Lord de Creci seemed to consider that all was well, and followed his guide, without the least appearance of hesitation and in dead silence, which was, however, interrupted by Mr. Bluthenbaum, inquiring whether he might be permitted to light a cigar.

"Certainly; what's to prevent you?" returned the Earl, somewhat surprised at the request, for, though the last man in the world to suffer any liberties to be taken with him, he by no means saw the necessity for Fritz asking leave to light a cigar, when following him over a moor on a cold night in December, any more than if the deserts of Arabia were then, as they had already been, the scene of their wanderings.

"I thought you were laying an ambushade for some one, my lord," said Fritz; "the odour of the tabac might betray it."

"Tobacco," muttered the boy. "It would be a poor case if smokin a cigar would matter much now, and the polis twenty miles off. In ten minutes you'll see more tobacco then ivir you seed in your life, Mr. Bloodybones, or Blunderbuss, or whatever your jaw-breakin name is. I'd be mighty glad if they'd lave the guns behind. I'm afeard the boys'll want to take them from them. They've no call to be afeared of the furrenners either; sure our boys would'nt let them touch them, and they come to see the fun, and dhrink success to the venture. Well, any how, here we are in the thick of it."

Just at this moment they rounded the corner of a lofty precipitous rock, that had hitherto concealed the mouth of the loch from their eyes, and almost immediately came upon a couple of dozen of men, women, and children, who were hurrying up the steep path, all bearing a package that strongly resembled a soldier's knapsack, covered with canvass, upon their backs, much to their mutual astonishment; for the moment these people caught a sight of the advancing party they halted, held a short consultation among themselves, and then throwing down the packs in all directions, scampered away; but a few words in Irish from Lord de Creci's guide brought them back, and laughing and joking among themselves at their unnecessary alarm, they resumed their burdens and passed on their way, wishing his lordship good night and long life to him and his whole house, with as much careless unconcern as if they were engaged in nothing that could seem extraordinary or illegal in his eyes.

The party now had time to look out upon the loch, which had much the same character as that upon which the lodge stood, a character

indeed common to the whole of that wave-worn coast, a long winding inlet, nearly dry at low water, closely shut in with hills, which rising abruptly above it, were not extensive enough to hold any accumulation of fresh water, so that a little tiny streamlet was all that found its way to the ocean through its commonly lonely waters, which now, however, were absolutely alive with bustle. On the shore, some blazing roots of bog fir cast a flickering glare upon a crowd of the peasantry, men, women, and children busily employed unloading a couple of boats that were lying alongside the rude ridge of rocks that served for a pier. The cargoes of these boats consisted of small packages, such as those carried by the people whom our friends first met, of the size and shape of soldiers' knapsacks, each furnished with a pair of straps, which passing round the shoulders, enabled all, even women and children to carry one of them, and as soon as each got his load upon his back, he rapidly made his way up the hill and away by different paths and disappeared in the night. As fast as the boats landed their cargoes they pulled out again towards a vessel in the offing, from which several boats were making their way towards the shore. She was of a most suspicious appearance, lugger-rigged, very low in the water, and rather overmasted, and was endeavouring by short tacks to hold her ground at the mouth of the loch, till she had succeeded in landing the contents of her hold. This, judging, from the number of bales to be seen on shore in every direction, she must have almost accomplished, and in another hour the turn of the tide, then at the flood, would enable her to clear the land, notwithstanding the westerly wind, and stand out to sea on her homeward voyage.

"Ah, ha! contrabandista," said Fritz, the sight probably recalling something he might have seen in the Peninsula, for the whole character of the scene was visible at a glance; it was a smuggler running her cargo, and the expediency of sending the police twenty miles off, on a wild goose chase, was tolerably apparent.

"What in the name of Satan, did you bring us herè for, you young imp," exclaimed Lord de Creci, in an unwonted tone of excitement, and seizing the terrified boy by the apology for a collar his coat presented.

"Sure, I thought your lardship and the captain wanted to see the cargo run, my lard," said the boy; "there'll not be another these three months."

"I told you to take us to Dorrha glebe," said the Earl, his face becoming perfectly livid with anger; "by heavens, if you attempt to play tricks with me—"

"I didn't think you intinded it, my lard," interrupted the boy, with the appearance of being frightened out of his senses, "sure I did all for the best; any how this road will take us there."

"It will never do to pass through that crowd," observed Henry; "some of them will be sure to give notice."

"You must take us some other way," said the Earl, "come be quick, there's no time to be lost."

"Some other way," said the boy, eager to make up for his mistake, "by dad, I'll shew you twenty other ways, my lard; first and foremost

there's the road by the bridge of Knockgallion, if it was'n't that the bridge is broken down, but that dosen't much matter, seeing that there hasn't been a dhrop of water in the river since the bridge was built or afore it, barrin what they put in to swear the presentment by, that's only three miles round; then there's the road by the fairies thorn, only may be your lardship wouldn't like to go near that there at the time of night, that's two miles round; then—"

"Stop your chattering, and shew us the nearest way," said Lord de Creci, impatiently looking at his watch, "we have lost overmuch time already."

"Well, my lard, it's only a step back, we'll get into the new road, again in a jiffy;—its mighty sorry I am that I led you astray, but I though your lardship and the captain would like to see the fun."

"What do these people transport in their havresacks?" asked Fritz.

"Thransport them," said the boy, "faith they must catch them before they thransport them, more by token it isn't thransportable at all, its only three months in jail."

"What do they carry in the packs he means," said Henry.

"Is it the half bales, Captain?" answered the youth, "they're tobacco—half a hundred weight each."

"But how are the owners ever to get it back from all that crowd?"

"Oh! faith they'll get it back from them safe enough, if the polis don't get houl't of it, the boys know where to lave it, and they'll get well ped for every bale they bring into the place they've fixed on."

"And where is the place?"

The youngster paused for a moment; and notwithstanding the unhesitating confidence that the Irish peasant is accustomed to repose in the 'army,' he had acuteness enough to know that this was a secret not rashly to be entrusted to any one, however trustworthy in his eyes. "Meself dosen't know, that's their look out," answered he, and proceeded on his road muttering to himself: "What the blazes are they up to now—with the guns too—I thought they were for fear the furren sailors might be impudent.—but I'd like mightily to know what they want at Dorrha glebe,—may be they want to have a bit of fun with his riverence, to frecken the ould minister; sure they wouldn't walk ten miles of a night for *that*, more by token their faces isn't blackened."

"It is a very strange circumstance in the history of these outrages," said Lord de Creci to Henry, "that the persons selected for victims are almost invariably those whom you would suppose would be the last individuals that it would occur to anybody to injure: generally they are the most amiable and well intentioned persons in the country,—no amount of tyranny,—no extent of extortion draws down the veugeance of the peasantry so surely and fatally as the facility of character that prevents their looking upon its possessor with feelings of personal fear. This Mr. Harvey is an instance of this; a more benevolent kinder-hearted man does not exist, and as far as his limited means will allow, he has never hesitated to extend his charity alike to Protestants and Catholics: yet all this avails nothing, he is doomed; if even now his life is saved, it will be owing to the merest accident in the world, the accident of our being at Slievenamore on a particular day, and yet his

offence is probably nothing more than the attempt to collect some tithe, or arrear of tithe, to which he has an indubitable right, and for want of which he and his family are starving. However we have no time to lose,—by strong walking we shall yet reach the glebe in time,”—here he drew himself up to his full height, and a stern smile passed over his features, — “in time to protect the hearthstone of the defenceless, to fling death in the path of the murderer, and to read a bloody lesson to the shedders of innocent blood.”

The Earl had now quickened his pace so much that their guide was trotting by their side; the wind which had hitherto come in fitful gusts now brought a drizzly sleety rain with it, and much care was requisite to keep the guns dry, for it was an occasion upon which it would never answer for them to be found with unserviceable arms. During the whole of their walk they did not meet a single soul, and it is probably more easy to imagine than to describe their feelings, when their guide pointed out a distant light as coming from the glebe house. Harry's blood coursed through his veins like lightning. Fritz, who had by this time ascertained the nature of their expedition, commenced a series of polyglot exclamations. *Tausand Nochmal! Tonnerre de dieu! Himmel Sacrament! Cospetto!* were the safety-valves by which he let off the steam; whilst Lord de Creci, his lips compressed, his brows knit, his eyes flashing, silent, swift, and deadly, quickened his pace till it fairly amounted to a run—all felt that they were literally engaged in a race for life and death, even now the slayers might be at hand,—rood after rood rolled back under their hurrying feet, and when, panting and breathless, alike from their rapid motion and their mental excitement, they arrived in front of the glebe of Dorrha, all felt a weight removed from their hearts when the quiet and undisturbed appearance of the house announced that the apostles of desolation were not yet come, and thus they were still in time to throw stout hearts and ready hands into the doomed house—in the hour of its utmost need.

It was not without difficulty, that they obtained admission at that unseasonable hour of the night, and during the time they were kept waiting on the steps, they had an opportunity of observing the poverty-stricken air of the place. The gate was broken, the fences were imperfect in many places, and the ragged appearance of the young plantations shewed that the cattle of the neighbours had availed themselves fully of that imperfection—the approach to the hall door was partly overgrown with weeds, and the lawn in front of the house was converted, by the labour of Mr. Harvey, his son and *his daughters*, into a potatoe field, upon which indeed he mainly relied for the subsistence of his family; and when at last, after a short parley, a slipshod maid of all work, did open the door, the interior presented the same appearance of wretchedness and want as the exterior had led the gentlemen to expect, for the obstinate and successful refusal to pay tithe had reduced the greater part of the clergy of that period, who not having private fortunes of their own, relied upon their profession for support, to a state of indigence of which few in England can form an idea.

The drawing room, into which they were ushered, was curtainless and carpetless; there were two common tables and four chairs, which, with

a large turf basket, a pair of bellows, a small cupboard, and a horse for drying clothes on, constituted the whole furniture of the room, and the scanty fire that burned, not in the grate, but on the hearth, shewed the sad necessity that existed for a rigorous economy even in the usually plentiful article of turf.

The good minister himself rose from the table, upon which a large Bible lay, as if he had been selecting a portion of the Scriptures for that evening's worship, in some astonishment at the appearance of the armed party; his eldest daughter, a modest timid looking young lady apparently about nineteen, had been too long familiar with such occupations, to think it necessary to lay down her father's waistcoat, which she was in the act of repairing; the son, a delicate boy of about twelve years of age, was mending a potatoe basket with some willow-twigs, which had been just brought in by a country girl, who was standing in a corner, waiting for some medicine which Mrs. Harvey was preparing for her bedridden grandmother. The aspect of that room was very dreary, the countenances of all were careworn and pinched, as if mind and body were succumbing alike under privation and disappointment long protracted, and apparently becoming more hopeless, but with this expression was now mixed a wild astonishment at the untimely and unexpected appearance of the two gentlemen, and the ominous circumstance of their being armed. However, there was no time to be lost, and melancholy as this scene was, it assumed an aspect of real horror, when Lord de Creci briefly informed the venerable minister of the object of their visit, viz. the protection of himself and family, for the cause that had brought them from Slievenamore was the information that the Earl had received from the countryman who had demanded an interview with him that evening, that Mr. Harvey had been condemned to death by the murderous tribunal of the peasantry that has stained the soil of Ireland with so much innocent blood; his offence being the attempt to collect some arrears of tithe, for years due, and his life was to be taken that very night. The next moment changed that scene of poverty, but still of tranquillity, into the bustle and hurry of the preparations for a desperate, and it was much to be feared, very unequal combat.

The preparations, being in the hands of those who knew well what they were about, were soon made, for the house, fortunately, in its very bareness simplified its own defence. It was surrounded by a sort of area, which made it impossible to get at the windows on the ground floor; whilst those of some servants' rooms in the basements were so small and well secured, that little danger need be anticipated of the murderers effecting an entrance through them; and fortunately, all the shutters of the lower part of the house were in a state of complete preservation, so that, in fact, there was every reason to suppose that the attack would be made at the hall-door, and measures were taken accordingly. The danger of the farm yard being set fire to behind them, was obviated by two reasons: one was the wind, which blew strongly from the other side; the other, the circumstance that years had elapsed since the good clergyman had possessed a single truss of hay, or a single sheaf of corn. A horse was a luxury long abandoned,

and his whole possession in turf would not have amounted to five kishes. Fortunately there was an old yeomanry musket in the house, which had long been used to terrify the crows, and a spare flint (a few of which, Harry, with the instinct of an old soldier, had put into his pocket when he left Slievenamore.) having rendered it serviceable. Fritz, thus armed, was entrusted with the surveillance of the rear of the house, whilst the other two made their arrangements for the defence of the front. The ground plan of Dorrha glebe was one not uncommon in houses of its class: the door opened upon a small hall, on one side of which was the dining-room, and on the other the drawing-room, whilst the staircase rose directly facing it; so that from the first landing-place to the door, all was clear, and upon this landing-place, Lord de Creci and Henry, sheltered by the temporary barricade of a chest of drawers, resolved to wait till the assailants forced the door, and then receive them with an unexpected, and probably very fatal fire. They had been led to this determination by the consideration, that inasmuch as the police might momentarily be expected, it was desirable to amuse the assailants as long as possible outside the house, for Lord de Creci was from the beginning more anxious that a terrible example should be made of the offenders, than solicitous about his own personal safety, which was however, nevertheless, a matter to be considered, as far as it consisted with their loftier object, the defence of the helpless man from the ruffians who thirsted for his blood; and for that reason they judged it better to adopt the plan of defence they did, than to show themselves at the windows, where a chance shot, or even a chance stone, might disable one of them at a period that might prove fatal to every soul in the house. Neither of them entertained much doubt of the success of their plan, provided the attack was made in ignorance of the preparations for receiving it: a sudden and unexpected burst of fire is always startling, even to trained soldiers, and was likely to prove absolutely crushing to a mob engaged in the commission of a brutal and murderous outrage.

"They'll never get up the stairs," said Lord de Creci, as having placed the last three candles the house afforded in positions to light up the hall well for the deadly scene that was shortly to be enacted in it, he prepared to ascend the narrow staircase.

"Not one of them will live to the foot of the stairs," returned Henry: "nothing staggers a mob so much as stumbling over their own dead; but I hope we shall not find it necessary to shed much blood; it's bad enough in warfare, but I really have no heart for bloodshed here: one's own countrymen—By Jove, this exercise has made me exceedingly thirsty."

Mr. Harvey, who heard this, said something to his wife, who shook her head, and answered in a whisper: he then gave a hurried direction to his eldest daughter, who entered her mother's bed-room. He then addressed Lord de Creci.

"It is two years since there has been a drop of wine in this house, and with the exception of a bottle of ale last Christmas-day, it is fourteen—fifteen months, since there has been a drop of malt liquor: there was some buttermilk this morning, but my wife tells me that the

children had it with their potatoes for dinner, and this is literally all that I have to offer to the men that are perilling their lives to save my family,"—and he took from the young lady's hand the jug of water that she had brought out of the bed-room.

Every window had been secured, and all possible preparations that Harry's military experience could suggest, had now been made to receive the expected attack. The lower part of the house, in accordance with the system of defence they had agreed upon, was entirely deserted, every door being carefully fastened to hamper or obstruct the movements of the assailants. The family were above stairs. Bluthenbaum at his post, looking around with the cat-like vigilance of a sentry of the Grand Army, and trusting at least as much to his ears as his eyes. Lord de Creci and Henry behind their temporary barricade on the landing-place, the one, calm and passionless, in all the deep concentrated firmness of resolve that belonged to the sense of duty which impelled him to take a step that he did not attempt to conceal from himself, *must* cost several lives, in order effectually to check a system of outrage that was becoming a greater curse to the country than ever was famine, typhus, or small-pox ; the other, it must admitted, rather inwardly exulting at the idea of the contrast between the scene that was actually on the point of occurring, and that which anticipation was probably, at that very moment, placing before the eyes of the murderers,—a helpless clergyman on his knees, praying for mercy, and praying in vain. a wife and daughter maddening in their agony, a death-blow, a groan, white hair bedabbled with blood, a gasping for breath, a widow and an orphan ;—and it was not without some feeling of the gladiator arising in his breast, that he pictured to himself the mob rushing in, raging to gorge their thirst for blood in this scene of butchery, and suddenly finding themselves dazzled, blinded, and terror-smitten, helplessly and hopelessly going down, man after man, under a close, deadly, and unexpected fire.

For some minutes the silence was unbroken, save by the now loud and distinct ticking of the clock, whose hands already pointed to eleven: all was prepared, the arms loaded, and cartridges laid before those that wielded them, ready to reload, if the first fire should not prove effectual in checking the advance of the murderers. Between the chest of drawers and the wall a narrow opening was left, for it was a material point to amuse the assailants, and delay the attack as long as possible ; to effect which, the girl, who was literally the sole servant that Mr. Harvey's poverty allowed him to keep, was placed at the door to parley with them. Eleven struck, and still nothing had happened: Henry was mechanically counting the banisters, when a slight but distinct tap at the door, that ran through the house like an electric shock, brought back the thoughts of every body there, to the deadly business of the night. No answer was returned, the tap was repeated, and the bell was rung, and then the girl, after a short interval, asked, "Who's there?"

"It's me," said a voice from the outside.

"Av coorse it is, who else would it be," returned the girl, "and who may you be?"

seemed to be transferred from the stairs to the hall door, loud cries arose from below, a few dropping shots were heard outside, and all that could escape from the house rushed tumultuously out.

"La colonne ever breaks from the rear," observed Fritz, triumphantly; the recollections of many a hard-fought field recurring to his memory and quite obliterating all consideration that he was no longer a French serjeant but an English Nobleman's valet, "*en avant en avant, mes braves*,"—and another moment explained the change, which was caused by the arrival of the police. They were not a minute too soon, but they *were* come; the dangers of that terrible night were over, and though most of the unwounded assailants escaped in the darkness, several prisoners remained in the hands of the defenders. Three of the unhappy men had already gone to answer for the deed of darkness in which they died.

There was much achievement in this, the lives of that doomed family had been saved, the system of murder had been seized on in mid career and stricken to the earth, and a terrible lesson had been written in characters of blood for the misguided peasantry, yet both Lord de Creci and Henry felt at the moment, as they afterwards agreed, when talking over the subject in a very different scene, that notwithstanding all those considerations for the victors there was little of the triumph of victory, there was no national pride gratified, no professional devotion rewarded, the task of blood, appealing to no passion, lay before them in its naked revolting deformity, there was nothing to call forth exultation, but much to cause horror. The dead lay there, but they were not gallant enemies, inspiring respect even in death, they were cowardly murderers struck down with the arms of murderers in their hands, and the thoughts of murderers in their hearts. The excitement of the battle was over, but the slaughter was not, for the prisoners were doomed men, who merely escaped shot and steel to perish on the scaffold. They were seven in number, of whom only two were unwounded, but one was lying on the ground, evidently in the agonies of death. He was a young man, apparently not more than twenty years of age, and when life was ebbing fast, and Mr. Harvey attempted to speak to him upon religious subjects, repelled him with dogged resolution.

"Lave him alone," said another of the prisoners. "lave him alone with your devil's scripture, sure you would not kill body and soul together, you ould heretic,"—and the speech attracted notice towards the speaker. He was still younger, scarcely looked to be eighteen, when suddenly one of the police, after coming in front of him and examining his countenance carefully for a moment, exclaimed, "It's you is it, that we've been after this twelvemonth and more? so we've caught you at last, Mr. Michael Cassidy." The man started when his name was pronounced, and cast his savage eye at the pool of blood at his feet that flowed from a wound in his leg which was the immediate cause of his capture, as much as to say, 'if it wasn't for that, you'd not have caught Michael Cassidy so easy.'

"I know nothin' about you," said he sullenly.

"It would be well for you if we knew as little about you, my boy,"

returned the other. "That boy, my lord," continued he, "young as he is, has been at two murders, and the burning of a whole family alive. He's the most determined ruffian in this country."

"Can it be possible," said Mr. Harvey, "and he so young?"

"Young," said the man with a nod, "faith, I'm thinkin I'm much about as old as I'll ever be,"—and he broke into a hideous laugh, in which more than one of the bystanders joined, for all the police knew that his days were numbered, his identity had been sworn to, the evidence against him was known to be complete, and he, at all events, would certainly be executed at the spring assizes, as indeed happened accordingly.

"Hush," said Lord de Creci sternly, "whatever men be, their lives are not subjects to make jokes on."

"By dad," said the ruffian, "there's not a counthry in the world where they understand makin' jokes on men's lives better than in Ireland." With the one exception of this man, no single individual captured was known either to the police or to any body in the house, few of them, as it afterwards turned out, having come a less distance than thirty miles, and one lived fifty-four miles off. Several were only acquainted with Mr. Harvey's person by his having been pointed out to them the day before. But when the confusion abated a little, and they had time to look round upon the preparations that had been made for receiving them, and saw that they had been betrayed, and had rushed headlong into a snare laid with a deadly skill to entrap them, they one and all exhibited the greatest anxiety to know 'who sould the pass on them.' This information, which indeed was confined to Lord de Creci and Harry, was of course denied them; and the police, placing them in the centre, moved off with all military precaution, for it was by no means improbable that a rescue might be attempted. The prisoners seemed to be moved much more by the thirst of vengeance against the informer, who had led them into their present situation, than any consideration of their situation, which was one of imminent danger to their lives. No rescue was, however, attempted; the spirit of insurrection had had enough for one night: but Mr. Harvey's fears having been not unnaturally awakened by the event, Lord de Creci and Henry remained the rest of the night at the glebe.

The next morning the latter returned to his regiment, but with the promise, in a fortnight more, of repeating his visit to Avonmore.

CHAPTER XI.

THE fortnight passed without anything particular happening at Bally-macdaniel, but upon our hero's arrival at Avonmore, he found that a sad catastrophe had occurred two days before. It will be recollected, that on the night of the attack upon Dorrha glebe, a groom belonging to Lord Ellesmere had been despatched to the nearest police station with a notice of the intended outrage, and to his promptitude in conveying it had mainly been owing the opportune arrival of the armed body that turned the fortune of the fight when victory was trembling in the balance. The name of this unfortunate man was Murphy; he was the son of a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood, and though then employed in the stables, was not one of the Marquis's regular or English establishment, but merely taken on for the occasion of the visit to Avonmore, and he was recently married. His share in that night's work had excited the ire of some of those who had effected their escape, or perhaps, of some of the relatives of the killed or prisoners, and but two days before, he had been waylaid, severely beaten, and left for dead upon the road side. Life was, however, not entirely extinct, and when, after some hours of insensibility, during which no one had ventured to render him the slightest assistance, he came to himself, he had just strength enough to crawl to a cottage, whose owner, who had that moment shared his scanty meal with a wandering beggar, with the hearty good will that characterises the feelings of the lower class of Irish towards their yet poorer brethren, dared not assist him, dared not give him the shelter of his roof, dared not so much as lend him a hand to raise him from the dunghill upon which, exhausted and bleeding, he had sunk to die. Such is the character of popular vengeance in that country, in the nineteenth century, and such is the perversion of heart to which it gives rise.

The beggar, however, who, here to-day and gone to-morrow, had no such fear, gave him what little help he could, he raised him from the dunghill, laid him upon a dry spot, in the attitude which seemed to promise him most ease, poured some water down his throat, and then throwing his own great coat over him, which no body ever dreamed of stealing, proceeded to Avonmore Castle to give notice of his situation. A cart was immediately despatched for him, and he was brought home to receive what benefit he could from medical aid, but there was little life left in him; sometimes he could articulate a few words, but more generally not. He seemed conscious of his wife's presence, for he lay with her hand in his, and occasionally fixed his failing eyes upon her, taking little notice of anything else; he sank rapidly, and it was about noon the following day, that Lord de Creci, who had ordered that he should receive the earliest notice of any appearance of

revival of the sufferer, was informed by the surgeon that although anything like revival was out of the question, the patient was restored to consciousness; the "lightening" that so often announces the immediate approach of death, having placed him for the moment in the full possession of his senses.

Upon entering the little room which the sufferer occupied, Lord de Creci found him lying in the bed, evidently on the verge of death, and holding his wife's hand. He made a feeble attempt to sit up as his master entered, but fell back again upon his bed; and though he did not speak, looked wistfully at the poor creature that was sobbing by his side. Well did Lord de Creci understand that look, and he immediately anticipated what he knew lay next the dying man's heart, by promising that the widow should be provided for by the family, as well as the aged mother who had depended for her living upon the son who was about to be torn from her. The poor man's countenance lighted up for a moment. "May God Almighty bless and prosper you, my Lord," said he, "you and yours wherever you go, in the fields, and in the castle, on the say and on the land; may He watch for you in the night and guide you in the day; may He comfort you in sickness and strengthen you in health; may He give you honour and glory, and riches, and prosperity, you and yours for ever and ever; may He give you the blessing of a—" here his voice faltered, "lovin' wife," and here he grew manifestly fainter, "and childer, that be an honour to your name, ahem"

A dark shade passed over the Earl's face, but it was for a moment; the poor man's voice failed him, an indistinct murmur escaped his lips, they moved again as if in prayer, there was a convulsive sob, a slight shivering, a gurgling sound in the throat, his countenance fell, his eye fixed, and the silence of that room was only broken by the sobbing of a new made widow.

To provide for the welfare of that poor woman, was the first care of Lord de Creci, and munificently did he supply such compensation as was possible, and he also indulged her in the gratification of a wish, which had something of a feudal character in it: viz. that as the deceased had lost his life in the service of the family, and in the direct execution of the heir's commands, his wake should take place in the servants' hall, and that his funeral should have the character of a public tribute to his memory from the family, in token that he had died a faithful servant of the house of Avonmore. This request was complied with, and the night of Harry's arrival, had been fixed for the performance of that ceremony.

He found Lord de Creci somewhat dejected; it seemed as if something had occurred to cast a deeper shade than usual on his brow, more than the circumstance of a groom being killed would account for; for Henry had learned in the course of his now more familiar intercourse with the Earl, that in the wandering life in the east he had led, scenes of blood and murder, and of the, perhaps, yet more horrible ravages of the plague, had been familiar to his eyes; and besides he knew that when the party started for Slievenamore, Lord de Creci did not so much as know the man's name, for he had heard him ask what

it was. However, the Earl received him with his accustomed friendliness; indeed it seemed as if the young soldier had attracted the gloomy nobleman's good will so powerfully, that the volatile Lady Sarah had already begun to observe that she was not certain whether she should not consider herself in the light of an aunt, and expect to be treated with due respect; whilst Lady Madelaine pleased at anything that seemed to awaken in her brother's breast those feelings of kindliness and affection, that she sometimes fancied were almost dead within him, and happy to see him roused from his customary moody apathy, to love any body or any thing, felt grateful to Harry for recalling him to a kinder communion with his fellows, and received him with increased warmth.

For another reason, however, she had begun to feel an interest, though rather a painful one, in him; and it so happening that he sat next to her at dinner that day, she rather astonished him by her choice of the subject of conversation, which, in the midst of that gay assemblage struck him as being about as mistimed as it was misplaced in being addressed to him. This subject was the truth of revelation, and to it she pertinaciously adhered, though for what reason he could not even conjecture; and at last, after trying the ordinary topics of the day, the magnificent Belgic revolution which was then in season, the new Whig ministry which was then in flower, and Mr. John Long who was then in jail, yielded quietly to his fate, and supposing that it was the circumstance of a servant dying actually in the house, that had turned her thoughts in that direction, listened very patiently to a pretty long discourse, consisting of very sound theology, set forth in very feeling and beautiful language, and with an earnestness of manner and apparent anxiety to convince him, that puzzled him exceedingly. What she could mean by this, was more than he could understand, though more than once, the strong interest that she evidently took in his views on the subject, the persuasive manner in which she endeavoured to enforce hers, suggested to his mind that the Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine must have taken a very sudden and violent fancy to him, either body or soul, or perhaps both. Captain Mowbray was, in this instance, somewhat out of his reckoning, as young gentlemen commonly are, when they suffer themselves to depart from the things that can be understood, and to soar into the regions of the Poetry of Unaccountability, viz. young ladies' fancies.

This sort of thing was not new to him, for he had often observed, upon arriving at country quarters, there were commonly a considerable number of young ladies with expressive eyes and sentimental songs, great talents for knitting purses, and the army list by heart, who were ready to throw themselves into the arms of the new regiment, who commonly repaid their kindness by christening them "Garrison-hacks," but he knew this was not Lady Madelaine's character, and laid out two glasses of claret, after the ladies had left the dining-room, speculating what on earth could have put it into her head to address such a discourse to so unworthy an auditor.

He was aroused from these considerations by an animated debate that was going on in his neighbourhood, between Lord de Creci and Mr. Wilkins, on the subject of the wake that was to take place in the

castle that night, and the possibility of persuading the Irish to give up those mischievous and unnatural merry makings. Lord de Creci seemed to think the undertaking hopeless.

"There are no customs," said he, "that nations change or abolish more reluctantly than those relating to their dead;—touch a corpse, and you touch the best feelings of every father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, and child, in the kingdom. As long as these people consider that an uproarious assembly does honour to a corpse, so long will they insist upon paying it that tribute of respect."

"It is merely the force of imagination," replied Mr. Wilkins, "and you must make fire eat fire, and counteract imagination by imagination. There is nothing real in funeral rites: some nations expose their remains to birds of prey; the Ganges rolls along its yearly thousands; the sea will have a long account to render when it gives up its dead; some races burn, some bury, some embalm; and I am not certain but that some consider it respectful to eat their deceased relatives, at least I think Herodotus says so of the Massagetæ, who were a people of Central Asia."

"The custom is not extinct in the east yet," observed Henry, "I remember hearing in India, that there is a people in Sumatra called the Battas, who still have a custom, that whenever a man is getting old and tired of life, or perhaps suffering from some painful illness, he sends out invitations to his funeral, after the imaginations of the Sumatrans,—very likely his friends give him a hint that something of the sort is expected of him, but still he issues them as if they were his own idea, and perfectly voluntary,—to request the pleasure of their company to what is literally his funeral feast, for he climbs up into a tree, under which all his children, relations, and particular friends, assemble, and they dance round the tree chaunting a sort of dirge to the words 'The season is come, the fruit is ripe, and it must descend,' I suppose by way of grace, for he comes down the tree, and they cut him to pieces and eat him directly, as gravely as if he was a bullock."

"Exactly," said Mr. Wilkins, "the force of imagination reconciles them to those horrors. There is nothing real, as I say, in funeral rites. They differ everywhere. Earth, air, fire, and water, are ransacked for the disposal of corpses; but opinion on that subject is susceptible of modification, and what good might be effected if the people of this country could be brought to imagine *that the body objected to being waked?*"

"You had better try," said Lord de Creci with a sarcastic smile, "never was there a better opportunity, for they must listen to you here, which they certainly would not do elsewhere;—but I must say that your project reminds me strongly of the words of an old ballad, I remember reading some years ago,

'Poor maid, a gardener's corpse, 'tis said,
To cookmaids, gives but seldom heed;
And dogs that bark when they are dead,
Are very clever dogs indeed.'

A bright thought seemed to flash across Mr. Wilkins's mind, as the gentlemen rose to adjourn; and Lord de Creci, little dreaming that his suggestion was about to be followed, smiled at the visionary Englishman's estimate of his own power of effecting changes. "How often," said he to Henry, as they passed to the drawing room, "do we see people who fancy that they can by a few words of advice or remonstrance, change the rooted habits of centuries,—Mr. Wilkins is by no means deficient in abilities, but he is what they call a clever man with a twist."

Upon arriving in the drawing-room, Henry found the ladies assembled round the pianoforte, and one of the lady visitors, (who probably, was about as perfect a specimen of the class of young ladies we have recently alluded to as irreverently and ungratefully denominated 'Garrison Hacks,' by their warmest admirers) having just completed a very quavering version of "Meet me by moonlight alone," was on the point of embarking on an unknown tongue, and had struck up the first notes of a German air, then comparatively fresh in the country,—the now well known, 'Mein Schatz ist a Reiter,'—when she discovered she had forgotten the words. Lady Sarah however declared that she had a copy of them, and immediately produced it; and Miss O'Houlagain, having read them once over, to assure herself of their sound, of their sense she was as innocent as the babe unborn, sang as follows:

Mein Schatz ist a Reiter, nach Dublin marchirt.
Denkt nicht mehr wie heftig er hier coquettirt'.
Verliert dort noch einmal, ja, zehn mal, zein Herz;
Und lasst mir, Gott hilf mich, nur Weinen und Schmerz.
Die Hosen sind hochroth, mit gold, ach wie fein!
Hell glanzen die Stiefeln mit Day und Martein.
Sein Dolman! Sein Pelzrock! Sein Schnunbart! Oh Weh!
En kommt nicht mehr wieder, Ich werf' mich in's See.
Doch giebt es noch Hoffnung, ja, dort kann ich seh'n
Ein Hauptman in Scharlach, wie lieblich! wie schön!
Kein Tod in's kalt's Wasser, nein, tröst ich mich stets;
Geht zum Teufel Huzzar! Neues Liebchen—Wie gehts?

When she had finished, the applause was to all appearance mixed with some little tittering, and not quite certain what the sense of the words might be, she looked somewhat anxiously round; and Lady Sarah, apparently to draw off from the song the attention that seemed to be becoming a source of uneasiness to the singer, observed, "I have got another version of it," and sitting down, sang as follows:—

Mein Schatz is a Reiter, a Jaeger so fein
Liebt porter, plum pudding, roast beef, und Portwein
Früh morgens, ganz razend, nach Fuchsen er lauft
Spät abends, recht durstig, Herr Gott wie er sauft!
Zu lesen er liebt nicht, zu schreiben, ach nein!
Er leidet kein Wilddieb, auch kein schlechten Wein
Nach Tisch schläft er immer a kleinen halb, stund'
Dan traumt er vielleicht—nein er traumt auf sein Hund.

Doch ist er mein Schatz, ja, mein Mann musser sey'n
 Er liebt (und warum nicht ?) roast beef und Portwein.
 Ich lieb' ihn recht herzlich, vor alles auf Erd' !
 Liebt er mich, ja, beinahe, so wohl als sein Pferd.

Just as she concluded, amidst something that now was downright laughter, Henry observed that Mr. Wilkins, who had been alternately laughing and frowning, looking very grave, and chattering prodigiously to himself for the last quarter of an hour, suddenly set his lips firm, threw his head up into the air, and with the erect gait and stately step of one who is on the point of a great achievement, marched out of the room.

"He certainly does mean everything for the best," observed Lady Madelaine to Henry; "but he has got some extraordinary crotchets in his head. He came to me this morning, to ask whether I did not think giving the housemaids smart caps with cherry-coloured ribbons in them, would raise their moral character? I told him that I really did not think it would."

"One of them is going to be married to one of the young O'Connors," said the Marquis. "Mr. Wilkins endeavoured to persuade the bridegroom of the improvidence of their marrying so young, for the man was only twenty-one and the woman eighteen; but the lover answered him with a most unheroic question: 'If I don't marry and have childer when I'm young, who's to support me when I'm old and past my work?'"

"It is a very attractive part of the character of the peasantry," said Lady Madelaine, "the affection of children for their parents, and the way they maintain them when they are old and infirm."

"They reverse the order of things you describe in Sumatra, Mowbray," said Lord de Creci.

"I believe Mr. Wilkins has some project in his head about the wake," said Henry. "I expect to hear of his having addressed the assembly upon the atrocity of pipes and whiskey by way of funeral games. He'll address an uncommonly deaf audience if he does. There is something very touching, Lady Sarah, in the fidelity *your* version of 'Mein Schatz ist a Reiter' expresses."

"There is, Mr. Mowbray," returned the young lady, "and something very natural in Miss O'Houlagain's:—does your experience confirm it?"

"I make no revelations," returned Harry, with a laugh, for he certainly did recollect something of a rotation system of the sort in some towns with which he was acquainted. "I do not think it applies to the sex in general either."

"It does *not*, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Madelaine, earnestly.

"Do, for heaven's sake, go and sing something, Madelaine," hastily interrupted Lady Sarah. "I see that odious Miss Murray is going to inflict us with something about a vase in which roses have once been distilled, or Kate Kearney. Sing something or other, though I am sure Mr. Mowbray will not like it half as well as my German," and Lady Madelaine complied, and sat down to the pianoforte. As she

touched the keys a peculiar expression of astonishment, not unmixed with pain, came to the countenance of Lady Sarah. The notes were familiar to her, but she seemed to wonder why Lady Madelaine selected that particular one, as if it had some significance of its own independent of the music, that made the selection a strange one. Thus sang the Lady Madelaine:—

Though thine eye be shaded, And thy cheek be faded, And the

seal of death be on thy brow. Yet no fate can sever Our true

souls for ever. Tell me, love, where dwells thy spirit now? Can it

The first system of the musical score. It consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is G major (one sharp). The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

rest in stillness, In the mouldering chillness, In the lonely silence of the

The second system of the musical score. The vocal line continues with a series of eighth notes, while the piano accompaniment maintains its rhythmic pattern. The lyrics are: "rest in stillness, In the mouldering chillness, In the lonely silence of the".

tomb? Doth it wander darkling By the diamonds sparkling In the

The third system of the musical score. The vocal line has a melodic rise, and the piano accompaniment provides harmonic support. The lyrics are: "tomb? Doth it wander darkling By the diamonds sparkling In the".

deep mines caverned halls of gloom?

The fourth system of the musical score, which concludes the piece. The vocal line ends with a half note G4, and the piano accompaniment finishes with a final chord. The lyrics are: "deep mines caverned halls of gloom?".

II.

Where the boundless ocean,
 Rolls in ceaseless motion,
 Doth it join the dwellers in the deep ?
 Do the fairy daughters,
 Of the crystal waters,
 Lull it with the sound of streams to sleep ?
 Doth it greet the morning,
 When its golden dawning,
 Clothes the earth in glory with its light ?
 Doth it watch the even,
 Veil the purple heaven,
 In the spangled mantle of the night ?

III.

In mine hours of madness,
 Comes a voice of gladness,
 And a voice of promise, low and sweet,
 Of a joy immortal,
 When the sable portal
 Of the grave is passed, love, and we meet ;
 By the dream that's perished,
 By the hope I cherished,
 By that smile that ever answered mine,
 Give a sign, a token,
 E'er my heart be broken,
 That may guide my weary soul to thine.

The words were mournful enough, and the air, which though it is well known in Germany as a patois song, called "The Herzenload," is better known in England as "Weber's Last Waltz," was melancholy enough to suit them ; there was a dead silence for a moment, and again Lady Madelaine fixed upon Henry one of those expressive looks that had so puzzled him at dinner. It seemed as if she had recently learned something about him that interested her and yet possibly the interest was of a painful character ; and he, for his part, having got rid of the first hallucination that he had fallen into, began to feel extremely curious what it could be all about.

"Do you believe, Mr. Mowbray," said she, as she abandoned the music-stool to her sister, and retired to the sofa, whither Henry followed her, "do you believe that spirits after death, can seek one another ?"

"If souls are turned loose into the air after death, I do not see why they should not," returned the gentleman, who had never given the subject any very particular attention.

"But supposing that they should not be able to find one another?"

"A spirit may pursue another *before* death," returned Harry, bitterly, and involuntarily tearing off a bit of the fringe of the sofa, as thoughts

that he could but ill bear, arose in his mind, "one need not go beyond the grave for examples of seeking that that could not be found."

"There are many things on this earth," returned Lady Madelaine, "that are sought, and not found, because they are not *rightly* sought."

"I suppose, there are," returned Henry, who was getting more puzzled than ever, and concluded that the best way of arriving at the fair speaker's meaning, was to help her on towards it, by agreeing in every thing she said, giving her line enough, "there are two ways of doing every thing, a right and a wrong way."

"And of how much unhappiness is that not rightly seeking, the cause," said Lady Madelaine, fixing her large clear eyes on his face as if she would have read his very thoughts.

"A great deal of discontent arises from disappointed ambition and baffled avarice," said Henry, "but I do not know that one feels much sympathy with them."

"We were not talking of ambition or avarice, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Madelaine, hastily, "we were talking of spirits seeking one another on this side of the grave or the other, and if it be so galling to seek in vain on this earth, what must it be to be separated from those we love through eternity?"

Henry started, for these words seemed to have some imperfectly disclosed significance; and for the first time, the idea occurred to him that Lady Madelaine was really aware of his attachment to Clara Hastings, though how she became informed of it, he could not tell: he looked upon her beautiful face in amazement: its expression was partly of reproach, partly of hope, and hardly knowing what he said, he remarked: "I really have no very great opinion of the poetical idea of spirits seeking one another. I have no great faith in disembodied spirits at all:"—when suddenly a tremendous uproar was heard outside: the sound rolled up to the drawing-room door, and Henry's scepticism appeared on the point of receiving a personal rebuke from one of the beings he was treating with so little respect, when a mixed multitude of men, women, and children, utterly, in their terror, disregarding the place they took refuge in, roll'd into the drawing-room, with one universal roar of "Pat Murphy's ghost!" "Pat Murphy's ghost!"

CHAPTER XII.

To explain the cause of this uproar, it will be necessary to go back to the scene that was being enacted in the servants' hall. Here the friends of the deceased were assembled to pay due honour to the dead, and perform after the manner of their ancestors, his funeral obsequies, by pouring out copious libations to the ashes of their own pipes. Each took the view of the case that his own feelings prompted. Some were lamenting his early fate; others were easing their minds by cursing and swearing at his murderers. Others, more practical, were debating whether it would not be proper to give some of the Derrydun boys 'a quiltin'; others again, more philosophical, were speculating upon who was to fill his place; some were discussing the defence of Dorrha, whilst others, in a spirit of true catholic benevolence, were commiserating the inevitable doom of the unfortunate prisoners, the peculiarity of whose situation, they being taken red-handed in the fact, made it absolutely impossible for them to prove an alibi, —(which is the method by which murderers are saved at the expense of innocent men's lives in Ireland, corresponding to sham madness in England, and excluding the latter plea from Irish courts, the people being of opinion that God is too just to send two scourges, bad evidence and bad administration, upon a country at once,)—without which it would be impossible for a jury to avoid convicting them; others had come to the conclusion that as poor Pat's earthly affairs were settled for ever, it was no use troubling their heads more about them; but all, both men and women, had drank a little, just enough to make them more susceptible of emotion than usual, without being sufficient to deaden their perceptions to everything except their own enjoyment being undisturbed, as is the case in a more advanced stage of intemperance.

In one corner of the hall sat two of Pat's companions in the stable, listening to Jerry O'Driscoll, Harry's soldier servant, who, apropos to the melancholy occasion, was regaling their ears with very lively accounts of the various scenes of slaughter he had witnessed in the Burman empire, with such additions and ornaments as he thought necessary.

"'Ethen, Mr. O'Driscoll," said Tim Connellan, "you that have seen so many of them knocked on the head ought to know,—do you think in airnest them black devils have souls to be saved at all, at all?"

"I do not think they have," said Jerry, "for I never heerd tell any good of them; but, savin' your presence, I think they have souls to be d—d."

"Sure that wouldn't be fair play," urged Tim.

"I never heerd tell of fair play either, to the aistward of the Cape," returned Jerry, "but I'll tell you what I've seen them brute bastes do after we had dhriven them out the palins they used to fight us in,—I've seen one of them lie down as if he was dead, and maybe after you'd have

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passed on, thinkin' it was all over with him, he'd get up again as cunning as a weasel, and wound, or maybe kill some poor boy that wasn't thinkin' of any harm ;—now where do you think that man 'ud go when he died ?”

“The murderin' villin !” said Tim.

“Our lads were soon up to that dodge,” continued Jerry, “and by and by they never left a body behind them, dead or alive, without givin' it a touch of the bayonet that sent the black divil that owned it to pot.”

“Faith, I'll go bail he found the pot boilin' hot, divil mend him,” replied Tim with a grin, “anyhow that wasn't the way with him that's dead and gone, God rest his soul, poor boy, I mind the day afore ever either of us came here, that we were givin' one of the Derrydun boys a bit of a batin', and he lay down and took on as if he were dead, and some of the boys wanted to finish him off, Pat saved his life. ‘Lave him now,’ says he, ‘he's had enough,’ says he, ‘and if yez kill him outright, he'll not be able to tell what an elegant quiltin' we gave him ;’ and sure enough that was thrue; we got great glory in the country for that same.”

“Och, poor Pat, what did you lave us for ?” said, or rather sighed the third personage of the group, Corney Callaghan, who fed the pigs, and who had arrived at the maudlin stage, “to think of us sittin' here, atin' and dhrinkin', smokin', and talkin', like cows in a clover-field, and you layin' dead in the next room, with your precious sowl in purgatory all the time, Och hone !”

“Faith,” said the soldier, in whose mind, as is commonly the case in his profession, familiarity with death had produced its usual offspring, “he might go farther and far worse.”

“Och, whisht now, Mr. O'Driscoll !” said Corney in a loud whisper, and evidently in some way under the influence of superstitious fear, “whisht now, how can you talk in that way and the poor boy layin' dead in the closet there, sure its enough to raise him from the dead—and—begorra,—by the piper that played before Moses—here he comes !”

Unquestionably, at the door of the room in which the corpse was supposed, not to say expected to repose, a ghastly figure, clad in the habiliments of the grave, stood with a candle in one hand, and a plate of salt in the other, and surveyed the scene with an unearthly scowl, under which the scene did not seem comfortable, for it changed like magic; and what might not unaptly be called a levee *en masse*, ensued directly. Every one in the hall jumped to their feet, upsetting tables, tumblers, chairs, whiskey, candles, benches, and everything else that was susceptible of being upset, including their own intellects. The cat, half maddened by the disturbance, took refuge on the shoulders of the nearest housemaid, and held on by her claws. Tim, in the first frantic bound that the apparition had spurred him to, lighted on the fore paws of a bull-dog, who, in retaliation, immediately fastened on his rear; the women, as is their custom on such occasions, forthwith caught hold of the men, and made them almost as helpless as themselves; never was confusion more confoundedly confounded, whilst over and under, and round, and in the middle of the terror-stricken scene of disarray, the contents of a broken bottle of

whiskey, which had caught fire from an overthrown candle, cast a ghastly, unearthly glare, that confirmed in the minds of all, the impression of the supernatural character of their unbidden visitor.

The kitchen was, of course, cleared in the twinkling of an eye, but where to go next was the embarrassing question; nobody knew—the ladies-maids led into the interior of the house, and a momentary pause was made in the entrance hall; but the apparition still followed, and as he shewed himself to the astonished crowd, he addressed them "My good friends." This was rather too affectionate from a disembodied or re-embodied soul, (nobody knew exactly which,) for flesh and blood to bear; and in the full conviction that nothing but the 'rale quality' could keep this hideously familiar spirit at a distance, with a discordant roar and a mighty rush, they invaded the drawing-room in the uncontrollable agony of fear that levels all distinctions, as if Lady Madelaine's song had summoned a spirit from the other world to convince Captain Mowbray that spirits both could and would come when they were called, either from the vasty deep, or the servants' hall.

The surprise that this Celtic irruption occasioned in the company there assembled may be imagined, as with dishevelled locks, and torn petticoats, rent great coats, and unbuttoned knees, the startled crowd took refuge behind chairs and tables, pianofortes and curtains, peeping fearfully out to see if the ghost dared follow over the sacred threshold of quality. The cat still held her post; the bull-dog, having relinquished his hold, was making himself generally active by snapping at everybody's heels;—the scene ought to have been classical, for there was an amazing quantity of Latin rattling out in all directions, in which "*Propria quæ maribus, Carpe diem, Amo amas amavi, domus et placens uxor, Mea Maxima culpa, Hic jacet, Anno domini,*" any scraps from grammars, advertisements, any source whatever, being considered a sort of language likely to do as much execution in proportion as the more heavily-shot anathemas of the church; and as the awful figure appeared at the drawing-room door, a gigantic mackaw, with the voice of a grindstone, swelled the accompaniment to the univereal chorus of "Pat Murphy's ghost! PAT MURPHY'S GHOST!! PAT MURPHY'S GHOST!!!"

"Murder alive, here he is coming in among the quality," shrieked Tim Connellan. "Och Pat, dacency, dacency, man alive! God forgive me for sayin so, and he as dead as a herring; wirrasthew, if a boy dosen't larn manners after he's dead, whin the divil will he larn them?"

The pertinacious ghost, when he did own a scull could have had no organ of veneration in it, and all hope seemed to vanish as he paused for an instant at the door and his glassy stare traversed the assembly. The evil eye could not have called forth more superstitious fear among orientals than did his fixed look; and for a moment even those who were little troubled with the fear of ghosts, were puzzled what to make of this singular apparition,—when Lady Sarah, whose quick and undaunted eye outstripped every body else, suddenly broke into a paroxysm of laughter, ran her fingers over the keys of the pianoforte, which she had never quitted, and exclaiming "It is Mr. Wilkins," struck up the Dead March in Saul.

And so it was. Another moment disclosed the fact that it was indeed the soaring Mr. Wilkins who had occasioned all the terror, in his fantastic attempt to abolish the custom of wakes, by addressing the assembled guests in the character of the corpse, and protesting against the disturbance they caused him in his novel situation.

The scene now changed to one of outrageous merriment, which was heightened by the gravity and pertinacity with which Lady Sarah continued to play the Dead March in Saul. At last she cast a glance at her sister, whose countenance expressed considerable disgust at the ludicrous form which a deplorable event had suddenly assumed. And when Lady Madelaine laid her hand upon her arm and said: "There is a widow in the house, Sarah; this unhappy catastrophe is not to be made a jest of." Lady Sarah ceased playing.

Mean time the unsuccessful apostle of imagination was relieved of the trappings that were to have made his eloquence so impressive; the sheet he had abstracted from his bed-room to do duty for a shroud passed into the hands of the butler, and the plate of salt he carried gave up its spectral character, and returned from the world of spirits to the mineral kingdom.

"I have heard of catching birds by putting salt on their tails," remarked Lady Sarah, "but I never heard of that plan being applied to human beings."

"It is a rare thing," observed Lord Ellesmere; "a voice from the grave producing such mirth." And poor Mr. Wilkins, amidst jokes and jeers, was obliged to confess that his plan for revolutionising the funeral rites of the Green Isle, by pseudo-posthumous eloquence, had not all the success it deserved. Other consequences that it had, no one then foresaw; and the denizens of the servants' hall sidled sheepishly out of the drawing-room, and made the best of their way back to their separate territories, indulging themselves in such witticisms as occurred to them on the subject of Mr. Wilkins' vagaries, unanimously agreeing that an extra quantity of whiskey would be requisite to enable them to sleep that night,—and acting upon the agreement. The melodramatic character of the evening's entertainment afforded conversation in the drawing-room till the usual hour of separating, and Mr. Wilkins having promised to remain quiet till morning, the guests retired, and silence and darkness reigned at Avonmore.

CHAPTER XIII.

ONE o'clock boomed over the slumbering castle, but a candle still burned in the chamber occupied by Harry Mowbray. He paced moodily backwards and forwards, his mind agitated and passion-tossed by the singular conversation he had had with Lady Madelaine, and the significance that she had seemed to throw into it. Her language and manner puzzled and perplexed him. He knew perfectly well that she might be aware that he had loved and loved in vain, for he was not ignorant that Mr. Montague Marsden was in some way employed by the Marquis; but whatever might be the private communication between Avonmore Castle and Waterproof Lodge, he was well acquainted with that gentleman's character, and could believe that he was capable of communicating a love story about as easily as he could imagine his constructing a fifth canto of *Childe Harold*, or enriching Hampton Court with an eighth cartoon. He had no reason to suppose that the fair Maria corresponded with the young ladies, and even supposing he or she had informed the family of his misadventure with Clara, he did not distinctly see why Lady Madelaine should interest herself in the love affair of a gentleman with whom she was barely and recently acquainted, and a lady whom she had never seen or heard of.

"One o'clock," muttered he, as he gave up the problem in despair, and resolved to endeavour in the morning to find out what Lady Madelaine meant, or whether she had any meaning at all. "Well time never stops, thank God, the longest day has an end, and certainly that jackass Wilkins has helped us through this evening most brilliantly;"—and having thus unceremoniously disposed of Mr. Wilkins' pretensions, he went to close the windows, which he had left open to admire the moon and stars after the manner of lovers, and his eye was attracted by an odd looking solid black cloud, floating alone, of a very peculiar shape, and catching the moonlight in such a manner as to remind him irresistibly of Swift's floating Island of Laputa, in connection with Mr. Wilkins' visionary projects, and he watched it slowly gliding across the sky for some time. It was a clear moonlight night, and though a few clouds did drift across the spangled expanse, they did not obscure the bright full moon, that lighted up the spreading lawn and lordly woods, as clear as if it were little less than a chastened and mellow sun, and for a short time he paused and looked out upon that tranquil yet glittering scene with feelings of a mixed nature; at one moment they were filled with

All the dread magnificence of heaven ;

and he looked upon the countless myriads that were shining so calmly above him as if he longed to ask them a question that he imagined they alone could have answered; at another moment his thoughts reverted to the turmoil of the fight at Dorrha, the red streaks of flame flashing through the smoke, with death in their glancing, the crowded staircase,

the deadly struggle ; Lord de Creci's cool energy, and Bluthenbaum's broken English and ready temper for battle ; and thence to Mr. Wilkins and his eccentricities, and then they returned to Lady Madelaine's significant language, and not unnaturally strayed thence to the humble dwelling in the village of Somerton. He thought of Clara, and of what separated her from him ; and as he still gazed, his thoughts seemed to rise with the subject that filled his eyes, and for the first time the majestic harmony of the universe impressed itself on his soul, and he experienced the sensation that a sailor feels when, surrounded by impenetrable fog, he suddenly sees an object and loses it again directly, it may be a ship or it may be an iceberg, it may be a rock or it may be a light-house, it may be the sign of destruction or the token of safety, it is visible for a moment and then lost in the mist. With such a feeling as this he was about to retire to his couch, when he observed an indistinct sort of light fleecy cloud drifting across the sky. It looked strange, but it spread rapidly and thickened as rapidly, whilst the stars glimmered with a dull yellow light through it ; Henry started, for he was not unfamiliar with the appearance, and immediately afterwards his apprehensions were realised, the fatal truth developed itself, thick heavy volumes of black smoke rolling one over the other announced that the castle was on fire.

Just as he was about to give an alarm, it became clear that the fire had already attracted notice ; the labourers' bell rang violently out, a stir arose within the house, and immediately afterwards he was somewhat startled at hearing in the distance the loud blowing of horns. This, the common signal for rousing the peasantry for unlawful purpose, raised some misgivings in his mind ; for he perfectly well recollected how that sound had spread like wild fire over the country, a few months before, when one fine night the "army," i. e. one Captain, one Subaltern, two Sergeants, and fifty-four rank and file of the 100th, had marched out of Ballykilldaniel barracks to surprise a nocturnal assemblage of Terryalts, who were however rather too wide awake to be caught in that manner, having carefully placed scouts at every gate of the barrack, who gave notice the instant the troops stirred out, according to the practice of the country, and the troops returned as wise as they went ; they might as well have tried to catch a weasel asleep.

Being aware of the advantage of being a little before hand with time, he thought it was well to put his fowling-piece together before he descended the stairs, and just as he had accomplished that, in rushed his servant. "It's time to turn out, Sir," said he, somewhat astonished to see that his master had never turned in.

"I suppose it is," returned Harry ; "what's on fire ?"

"The house, Sir."

"Well, get the things packed, and take care of them when you get down."

As however he descended the stairs, it occurred to him that it could hardly be really an incendiary fire, for the people would assuredly not have chosen a time when the castle was as full as it could hold of guests and their servants ; perhaps he might have once or twice thought of the terror likely to be inspired by the redoubted heroes of Dorrha, and

indeed on reaching the drawing room he found that he had done the peasantry grievous wrong ; the fact being that in the confusion occasioned by the upset of lighted candles, bottles of whiskey, papers of tobacco, tables, chairs and benches attendant upon Mr. Wilkins' appearance as a posthumous protester, the furniture in the servants' hall had caught fire, and though extinguished for the moment, a spark had smouldered somewhere or other and at last broken out again. Unfortunately too, the offices adjoining the house were all thatched, and the eddies caused by the sudden change of temperature had carried some of the sparks a considerable way even to windward. The farm yard was already on fire, and the matter immediately assumed a most serious aspect. There certainly was water in the neighbourhood, for a tolerably large stream ran close to the house, but the conveyance of the water from it in buckets was a slow operation at best, and even then there was no fire engine to deliver it against the flames.

Lord de Creci's appearance reduced matters to some order, and Henry, as usual, acting as his lieutenant, they soon succeeded in establishing a line of people to pass the buckets up from one to another; but to preserve this, required constant vigilance, for every man, as fast as he found a full bucket of water in his hand, considered himself a sort of river god, capable of facing and defeating the flames with his own arm, and burned to make an onslaught in person, upon the intrusive element; and as to persuading them that twenty men so placed, would, within a given time, transfer two or three times as many buckets from the water to the fire, as the same number, scampering backwards and forwards with buckets in their hands, it would have been just as easy to persuade them that St. Patrick was a Frenchman or St. Peter a married man, or any other piece of heterodoxy. Certainly there was one point in which the system of the '*file*' did not work as well as might have been expected, and that was, that the only way that they could be induced to send down the empty buckets, was by "taking a shot" at the man who stood on a bench in the river, filling them; and as each shot raked the whole line, it more frequently took effect than was convenient, the cry of "heads," "ships," that was raised with each projectile, not by any means acting as a charm, either to protect, or to heal the wounds that were inflicted upon the named members.

Nevertheless, to work they went with a will: the fire at first made little progress, for it was a long time before it acquired sufficient intensity to prevent men approaching it closely with the buckets, and those who were more immediately engaged with it, seemed highly to enjoy the joke, as each man came up with his bucket, and discharging it into the flames, recoiled from the mingled puff of smoke, steam, and ashes that answered him. This, however, could not last for ever, they could not find out the exact spot where it originated, and though, had they possessed an engine, it might easily have been got under during the first hour, yet the buckets were not a match for it. It still made head; baffled for a moment, at one point, it broke out at another, and more particularly crawled along the lower part of the house, until those who were working above, found the floors getting so

hot under their feet, that they became alarmed, and many of them retired. "This comes of makin' game of dead min," said one, "wanst you rouse a dead man he's the divil: the mad Englishman ought to be stretched for it."

Whilst this was going on, the party of guests had assembled on the lawn outside. They had been compelled to quit the house by the smoke, for the draught occasioned by the front door being kept open to allow of the servants carrying out what articles of value could be saved, had drawn the smoke in that direction, and the whole house was nearly full.

"I am very much afraid," said Lord de Creci, calmly to Harry, "that the house will be burned: it is utterly impossible to meet such a flame as that without engines, and there is not one that I know of within twenty miles."

"I am afraid it is a bad business," replied Henry; "all that men can do these men have done, and there are plenty of hands: how well they work."

"Yes," said Lord de Creci, "it is on an occasion of this sort when their better feelings are *allowed* full scope that you see the real qualities of the Irish peasant. You will see in the morning, that of all this heap of things scattered about, not one will be missing, unless," he added, with a slight smile, "perhaps your gun." At this moment, his attention was attracted by an expression upon Lady Madelaine's face, amounting almost to that of agony. He hastened towards her, thinking that she was ill, overcome by the occasion, or perhaps even hurt; but immediately afterwards, she whispered to her sister, who started, looked wildly at her for a moment, and then ran off to a larger group of persons who were standing not far off. Her arrival produced an immediate sensation there, people looked hopelessly and helplessly at one another, some ran to and fro, with hurried questions and confused answers. "Where is she? Where was she? How came she to sleep so sound?" "She only came this morning, she was tired with her journey, poor thing, and she travelling all night in the mail." "Where is her room, is it in the back of the house? Och, murder, how'll she be got at all, at all;"—till suddenly the loud whisper of agitation swelled to a clamorous shout of "There she is:—ladders, ladders, for the love of God,"—as a female figure in her night gown appeared at one of the windows. The lower part of the house, was now totally impassable, owing to the smoke which was rolling in dense volumes through the hall door, to which the drawing-room and dining-room windows presented a strange contrast, for their well fitted shutters and heavy curtains did not permit a single puff to escape, and they looked just as if nothing at all had happened. Before, however, the ladder arrived, the unfortunate victim seemed exhausted, half stifled by the smoke, she sunk upon the window sill apparently senseless, her arms and head hanging outside, and when the ladder did arrive, it was hardly long enough to reach the window. In a moment, Harry was on the spot, and preparing to ascend, when the faithful O'Driscoll asked him, "Will I stick close to you, Sir?" as if he were about to escalate a fortress. "No, stay below and steady the ladder," was the

answer as he mounted, and his servant placing himself under it, seized it with a grin and a gripe alike energetic. The lady was by this time senseless and powerless, lying with her face downwards, and it was with no slight difficulty, and very great exertion of personal strength that Harry succeeded in getting her fairly through the window, for standing on a ladder as he did, it was no easy matter to preserve his balance. There was a dead silence, as slowly, but with the cool judgment that belongs to the stout heart, he succeeded at last in transferring the helpless body to his arms, and then carefully and steadily commenced his descent. For the first three or four steps, the people looked on in the sort of collapse, that spectators of such scenes experience, but as step after step made good, announced that in a few moments more his task would be done, a few hurried ejaculations passed rapidly into an eager chattering, and thence to an universal roar of exultation, whose accents of thunder, however, fell unheeded upon Henry's ear, when depositing his rescued burden upon the grass, and for the first time seeing her face, he recognised Clara Hastings.

CHAPTER XIV.

HENRY started back as this unexpected, and to him unaccountable sight met his eyes, bewildered not less by astonishment than by other emotions that it would be difficult, if not impossible to describe. It must be recollected that his feelings towards Clara were not those of a lover rejected under ordinary circumstances. A successful rival had not stepped in between him and the object of his affections, his heart did not accuse her of fickleness, nor had she refused him, because she found when matters came to a crisis, that she did not like him as a husband as much as she fancied she did as a lover; the word caprice as applied to her conduct never once occurred to his mind,—there was no breaking off about settlements, that conventional insolvency in the matrimonial market, so flattering to the gentleman and so convenient to the lady, as the (occasionally too transparent) veil that covers the lurking and sometimes secretly cherished image of an anticipated widowhood, no coronet dangling before her eyes would, he very well knew, have tempted her heart; and he acquitted her of the unwise prudence of having, as the phrase goes, two strings to her bow, fickleness, caprice, self-interest, ambition, all the ordinary vulgar motives which are the cold hard walls of stone that young ladies often build up between themselves and happiness, entered not his thoughts when he thought of Clara Hastings, for he knew that they had entered not into her thoughts when she thought of him. Himself straightforward and high-minded, he was capable of appreciating such qualities in others; and though to say that he was not furiously angry with her for refusing him, would be simply to say in so many words, that he did not really love her, still in that anger mingled no contempt; the sight of her features, thus strangely brought before his eyes, suggested no recollection of meanness or deceit lurking under a fair exterior, it merely recalled more forcibly to his mind the goodness and the beauty, the gentleness and the purity of the image, that attended him alike amidst the billows of the Atlantic, and the forests of Burmah, and that indeed he had about as much expected to meet within the ramparts of Prome as on the lawn of Avonmore.

Having no correspondent at Somerton, or to say truth anywhere else either, he was entirely unaware of the arrangements for her entering the family of Lord Ellesmere as a governess, he concluded that she was not a guest at the castle or he must have seen her or heard of her before; in short he was as much puzzled by the whole matter as it was possible to be, though at the same time, some light as to the meaning of Lady Madelaine's conversation of the evening before began to dawn upon him.

However it was no time for puzzles or the resolving thereof. Miss Hastings was immediately carried away, and our hero was as immediately recalled to the active duties of the time and place. The fire was still

gaining ground, in fact it had got head so completely that all hope of saving the castle had been abandoned, all that could be done was to carry out whatever was portable and deposit it on the lawn, and even this was every moment becoming more difficult and dangerous, as the smoke was rapidly filling the house. The ladies, whose wardrobes had been pretty nearly all removed early in the business, now prepared to quit the scene in search of a place of shelter, and shortly afterwards moved off in a body in the direction of the nearest house capable of receiving them; which happened, to the infinite and indescribable delight, confusion, pride, perplexity, and who'd-have-thought-it-ness of the owner, to be that of Mr. Fitzgerald, who received the party with a comical bashfulness, that would inevitably have drawn some of their customary sprightlinesses from the lips of Lady Sarah, could she have spared those lips from their immediate employment, viz. yawning fearfully.

Having thus seen the fairer portion of the houseless rich into a place of shelter, we must leave them to their repose, which seeing it was now six o'clock in the morning, was not long following the application of fractional arithmetic, in the subdivision of beds, sofas, &c. &c. which their numbers necessitated, and return to the scene of action, where Harry was not long left suspended like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth (to say no worse); that is to say, between the contemplation of Clara Hastings and a blazing castle, the time was by no means favourable for speculative indulgence, the practical is accustomed to predominate on such occasions, and the question "What'll we do now, Sir?" roused him to the agreeable consciousness that he was expected to do something, and did not know very precisely what to do or how to do it. He looked round for Lord de Creci, but that personage had vanished: "My Lord's gone round to the stables, Captain," said one of the men, and thither Henry proceeded. There he found that just previous to Clara's appearance at the window, it had occurred to the Earl, that in all probability nobody had thought of releasing the unfortunate horses, who might even then be suffering the tortures of being burned alive in their stables, and it was at this task he found him occupied, as well as giving directions that whatever could be found in or about the house to eat and drink, should be distributed among the people, many of whom had worked hard and cheerfully the whole night through.

Day had now broken, no help had arrived, Avonmore was doomed, and the lawn presented the scene of confusion customary upon such occasions, tables, pictures, chairs, glass, trunks, china, plate, even jewel cases, everything that could be got out of the house, lay heaped and piled about, anywhere and everywhere, but of that whole mass of unguarded property hardly one single article was touched, the peasantry would have felt the country disgraced if the opportunity had been seized to plunder; two cases of appropriation only occurred, and they must be considered more in the light of national characteristics than common thefts: Henry's fowling-piece was gone, and a couple of experimental acres about a furlong from the house, which the evening before had been a very productive turnip field, would not now have afforded a single

breakfast to a solitary sheep. We are not quite perfect yet in Ireland, we have our weaknesses, and these are a pair of them.

It is a strange and unsightly spectacle, a fire making head by broad daylight ; at night (owners excepted) the sublimity of the sight dazzles the eyes of the spectators, and no man looks quite unmoved upon a mighty element doing its work with the fierce energy that Dame Nature displays in whatever form she may appear, when she knits her brows and treating obstacles merely as things to be trampled on addresses herself to her task in earnest ; the broad glare of the flames, the flashing and the roaring, the lights and the shadows, the flickering and the shifting, the volumes of upswelling smoke, rising and racing, and clambering one over another, now in black dense masses hiding the stars that twinkle in the yet blacker heavens, now catching the glare of the fire upon their fleecy sides, and rolling like great clouds of grey mist before the wind ; the sudden outbreak of showers of sparks that rise and fall around as gushing from a fiery fountain, the thundering crash of shattered roofs and broken rafters, checking the flames for a moment only that they may break out again with renewed fury ; the restless motion and excited clamour of the crowd that so rapidly and unaccountably assemble on such occasions, at whatever hour they may occur, the glittering jets from the engines, and the frantic energy of the firemen, all contribute to present, standing boldly out from the back ground of the night, a stirring and animated picture, though the grouping and colouring are from the hand of destruction : but by daylight it is otherwise, the illusion is gone, and all is a saddening, sickening reality, the flame pales before the light of the sun, it is hardly visible, the smoke looks like smoke, and smells like smoke, the blackened shell, the charred beams, the yawning floors, the shattered windows, the exposed passages, all tell of ruin, but of no picturesque ruin ; the unsupported roof does not thunder down with a mighty rush and a hoarse roar into the flames that twist and twirl round it as if they were embracing it ; it seems to sink sullenly and unwillingly upon the smouldering embers beneath it, that barely shew a few angry red spots to mark its descent, and then gloomily blacken again ; each tottering wall that by night seemed about to fling itself savagely into the flames, looked now as if it rather threatened to fall suddenly outwards and crush all near it ; and if human life has been lost, the chill that creeps over our hearts at the sight of the lifeless remains of our fellow-creatures, comes colder and heavier far by daylight than by any artificial light. It was no mere fanciful whim that through so many nations dictated torchlight funerals, and the employment of candles in the obsequies of the dead. Such thoughts as the sun rose, suggested themselves irresistibly to the minds both of Lord de Creci and Henry, whilst they watched the flames making their rapid progress over the walls of Avonmore, a progress now unopposed, for no effective resistance could be offered to it.

About this time both gentlemen proceeded together to the stables to see how the removal of the horses was going on. They were nearly all got safely out, though it had been as usual in such cases a slow and tedious operation : some, apparently stupefied by the fire and danger,

stood sullenly with their heads hanging down, and would not stir till they had been saddled and bridled, or harnessed, as the case might be, when the instinct of habit enabled the grooms to lead them quietly out of the stable: others again, maddened by the confusion, plunged and kicked furiously, bounding from one side of the stall to the other with such violence, as to make it impossible even to get at their heads to loose them: this last difficulty prevailed most in the stable that contained the most valuable saddle-horses, and the first thing to be done when the Earl and Harry arrived there, was to clear it of the men who had swarmed into it in such numbers, that the best disposed horse would have found some difficulty in getting out, at least without trampling down some of them. Some had got into the mangers and were trying to drive out the horses by the gestures and motions, the sounds and the sights, they had found by experience effective in the driving of pigs: others again were endeavouring to effect retrograde movements by pulling at the tails: one man, a "whisperer," that is, a person who professed to have some supernatural power of influencing horses, was seated astride upon a partition, haranguing the crowd. He had tried his art upon a valuable Arab stallion belonging to Lord de Creci, which so far from lending a willing ear to Murtagh's charm, was very near borrowing an ear from that gentleman, for its attempt to bite off one of them was only baffled by the preternatural activity displayed by the wise man, the moment discretion became the better part of valour. He accordingly held forth from his stall upon the impossibility of "a good Christian doing any thing with the hathen baste that understood neither English, Irish, Latin, or any other dacent tongue, and that would have as soon taken a bit out of an honest man's head as out of a truss of hay, like a heretic divil's foal as he was;" and in another stall, a groom was saddling Lady Sarah's horse, vehemently assuring the creature that it was only going out to take a bit of a canter with its mistress on its back, and that it would be back against the next feed, (a promise that must have been very soothing to the animal, the more so, as the roof was already on fire.)

To get out the Arab was now the great point; he seemed to have a spice of Chartistism in him, for he declined listening to any thing, or any body, and indeed, impeded the clearing of the stable exceedingly, for he would let no one within range of his heels; so having expelled as many of the people as possible, Harry clambered over the stalls, and utterly despairing of getting him out by the influence of saddling and good advice, determined to content himself with turning him loose and letting him take his chance. Even this process was not so easy; the horse seemed perfectly mad, kicking, plunging, biting, flinging himself from one end of the stall to the other: he seemed, moreover, to have the use of his hoofs quite as well in his fore legs as in his hind: as to reaching his head, it was perfectly out of the question, and even when Henry did make his way into the manger, his difficulties were only beginning, for whilst one hand was employed untying the knots that kept the balls on the straps, the other, armed with the handle of a broom, was fully employed in keeping off the brute, who, after the fashion of his country, shewed a strong disposition to use his teeth on

the person of the Captain; and the difficulty was further increased by the tugs of the horse at his halter having drawn the knots so tight that it required no little exertion of strength to get them undone. However, the task was at last performed: the balls rolled on the pavement, and as the straps parted from the rings, the animal feeling his head free, stood up on his hind legs, and then wheeling suddenly round, lashed out in the direction of our hero, and catching him heavily on the leg with the off hind hoof, struck him instantly almost senseless, and for the time, quite lame, to the ground.

This was to Harry a most untoward event, for he was at that moment particularly anxious that his motions should be free and uncontrolled. He soon found that no bones were broken, but nevertheless, the blow lamed him effectually for the time; some days rest were evidently requisite, and as there was no shelter to be had in the blazing walls of Avonmore, the best thing that could be done, was to put him in a jaunting-car, and send him home to his quarters at the barracks at Ballymacdaniel, a change in his opinion considerably for the worse; and a few hours more found him admiring the chaste simplicity of military architecture, as exemplified in the bare walls of what the Board of Ordnance, with a good deal of grave humour, call "officers' quarters." They ought to be called "stores for warehousing officers," for they are as bare of any thing that assimilates them to a dwelling-place for a gentleman, as if they were built expressly to stow cotton in. Here, suffering all the bodily annoyance that lameness produces, and all the mental unsettlement that followed his momentary glimpse of Clara, the reader may readily conjecture upon what subject his thoughts principally ran, and it may also be supposed that they ran in a somewhat uneven and varying current: sometimes he looked up to her as a model of high and virtuous principles: sometimes he rather looked askant upon her, as a pattern of strait-lacedness: sometimes he wished her at his bed-side, and sometimes he wished her at the devil. He had hot fits and cold fits, ebbs and flows, whims and fancies; but whatever rise or fall might take place in the ever-varying barometer of his humours, its index still pointed steadily in one direction, towards an exceedingly vehement desire to get well, and an equally vehement determination to vote himself well, the very instant any thing of the sort could be attempted, which of course protracted his final cure several days, during which time his comrades were remarkably attentive to him, coming and smoking in his room all day, holding uproarious grog-parties over his head all night, meetings technically termed vestries, borrowing his horses, hoping he would soon be well, that is, fit for duty and the like. He himself was, as may be supposed, not in a very amiable temper. Each day seemed an age lighted up for the express purpose of worrying him, and as tiresome as a thrice told tale, each night a great black bore: if his friends came to see him they plagued him, if they staid away he thought they neglected him. He perplexed himself by a question, partly arithmetical and partly metaphysical, viz.: What exact amount of human happiness, enjoyment, and peace of mind is produced (that is metaphysics,) by 11s. 7d. per diem, (that is arithmetic,) + coals, candles, four walls, ceiling, floor

and bellows, being the pay and appointments of a Captain of Infantry ; thence he passed to geography, for the consideration was not to be passed over, that these extensive emoluments were only enjoyed upon condition of his being personally present, then, at Ballymacdaniel, with some unpromising colony in reversion ; and then he proceeded to moral philosophy, debating within himself the truth of the axiom, That it was as well to play for nothing, as work for nothing. Then he got tired of the rain, though he could not have gone out if it had been the finest day in the year ; in short he saw every thing through a green glass with a twist in it,—and a glad man was the regimental surgeon when his irritable patient could once more put his foot to the ground. A glad man also was Harry Mowbray, the first care of his convalescence, strange as it may seem, was the very object that had occupied his sick moments, viz. his feet, for he forthwith commanded an amazing expenditure of trouble and French-polish upon his boots, selected his best coat, and having added to all the personal advantages that nature had bestowed pretty liberally upon him, whatever assistance might be derived from a very elaborate toilet, rode off to Mr. Fitzgerald's, without very accurately knowing what he was going to do when he got there, not that there was anything remarkable in that, for we are all of us striving all our lives to get somewhere or other, without at all knowing what we shall do when we get there.

CHAPTER XV.

WE must now return to the inmates of Somerton, where Sir Thomas Horton had long and somewhat unaccountably lingered. That he should take much pleasure in Mr. Montague Marsden's society seemed almost as unintelligible as that the worthy Mr. Marsden should find any whatever in his; for two men, more utterly opposed to one another in mind, temper, habits, and ideas, could probably have hardly been found within the four seas. Still he seemed to wish for his company, at all events to have some reason for keeping him at Waterproof Lodge, and from time to time would courteously press him to prolong his stay; though perhaps much stress is not to be laid upon this demonstration of hospitality, for he knew his man well enough to be fully aware that if it so pleased Sir Thomas to remain at Waterproof Lodge, he would stay there as long as it seemed good in his own eyes without troubling his head about its owner's opinions upon the subject. True it is that his hospitable thoughts were sometimes a little mixed with an undefinable uneasiness, which will be well understood by those deserted of heaven, who, suffering for their sins in the purgatory of pets, find themselves under the necessity of exhibiting alike their own personal courage and their confidence in the owner's assurance of the bird's amiability by scratching a parrot's head.

Some thought that Mr. Montague Marsden, being of opinion that his sister Maria would be one too many in the menage he proposed to himself, (for there was a general impression in Somerton, that another proposal was due), had a sort of idea that she would make an excellent Lady Horton, and all were good enough to say that she thought so too: others again, personages of *very* acute observation, considering his having bought a pot of Bearsgrease and some patent blacking, the alpha and omega of getting up, to be the premonitory symptoms of another attack of the intermittent disorder to which he was subject, and anticipating a speedy renewal of his suit to Mrs Hastings, concluded that he persuaded the grim knight to remain as a sort of bottle-holder in the encounter about to ensue; but however that may be, the pair, ill assorted as they were, discussed their port and walnuts evening after evening most agreeably, seeing little of one another in the morning, for Sir Thomas' practice was to take very lonely rambles, that occupied him from soon after breakfast till nearly dinner time, and so day after day rolled away, and the beginning of January still found the survivor of the Mary Anne at Waterproof Lodge.

It was one of those evenings after Miss Maria had vanished with a gracious look, as much as to say "don't be long," that Mr. Marsden's equanimity was seriously disturbed by the announcement that his guest had finally given up his projected voyage to India,—an announcement which had the effect of converting the striking resemblance that

the worthy host's face bore the moment before to a golden pippin, into the picture of a half ripe crab.

"Why, what has induced you to change your mind?" asked he, "surely you are not a going to renew—" here he stopped short, for Sir Thomas turned suddenly towards him with a look that was quite sharp enough to remind him that it was ill playing with edge tools, and even upon Mr. Marsden's round shining head, the bump of cautiousness was abundantly developed, indeed it might be said to rise not as an ordinary protuberance from the surface, but to be a species of table land, overspreading the whole district.

"No," returned the other, "a man *may* make a fool of himself once, without being received into the numerous and worshipful corporation of idiots, that this world is peopled with for the good of the worms, but the second time is quite another matter, the disease must not be suffered to become chronic."

"Well, I am really very glad that you have come to that conclusion, Sir Thomas," replied Mr. Marsden, "it is a great weight off my mind; for since you have been here, I have been somewhat uneasy on the subject. I was afraid you had not quite made up your mind."

"My mind was made up for me," interrupted the other, "I had nothing to say to the settlement of that affair, nothing—no—no thought of what I felt—no care for what I suffered—no—well—before now men have fancied they were treading on a worm until they found they were stung by a serpent, ha, ha, ha,—this is not such a bad world after all, we have some consolation in our troubles,—thank you; I did not exactly mean *that* though—" and he broke out into a wild laugh, for Mr. Marsden at the words "consolation in our troubles," mechanically pushed the port wine towards him; "no," continued he, filling his glass nevertheless, "something better than—" here he paused, and after gazing on vacancy with an expression of malignity as if he could have annihilated it, (which would have been the sublimity of materialism,) he suddenly asked his host, "Did you see the last letter?"

"No," said Mr. Marsden, with a somewhat embarrassed air.

"Well, I suppose you have a pretty good guess at its contents," said the other, whose notice Mr. Marsden's confusion had by no means escaped.

"I conjectured from your sudden determination to go out to India," said the other, "though" added he, correcting himself, "I was aware you had another reason."

"Well, there it is, read it,"—and Mr. Marsden read as follows:
"My dear Sir Thomas,

"I hasten to reply to your letter of the 20th, which has just reached me, and must beg, in the first instance, to assure you how fully I appreciate the delicacy which prompted you to apply for my approbation before addressing yourself to my daughter, at the same time I feel it due both to you and her, to point out at once, and without farther delay, the utter impossibility of the union you contemplate. You must be aware that your income, which, including your pay, the interest of your prize money and your private means, does not altogether exceed £800. a year, would not, even with the addition of what little I could

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afford to give Lady Madelaine, be sufficient for the support of a family ; and it seems to me that the income of £400. a year, which you state you receive from some unknown source, through the hands of Mr. Montague Marsden, is much too uncertain to be depended upon to maintain a wife and children. I must also observe, that though it would give me the greatest pain to say anything that might wound the feelings of a gallant sailor who has fought his way to rank and distinction in his country's service ; still there is a mystery respecting your birth and parentage, that a parent would naturally require should be cleared up, before entrusting his daughter to any one, however he might admire his personal character ; and altogether, for several weighty reasons, I must beg finally to decline, on the part of Lady Madelaine, the alliance you have proposed, and to add that I have her full concurrence in doing so. I trust that a more careful consideration of the subject will lead you to the conclusion, that in so doing I have best consulted the interests of all parties, and in the hope that this unfortunate circumstance will not interrupt the friendship that has hitherto existed between us, I remain,

My dear Sir Thomas,

Your sincere friend,

ELLESMERE."

" This is tolerably conclusive, is it not ? " asked Mr. Marsden, folding the letter carefully up, and fitting the broken edges of the seal together, by way of an excuse for not looking Sir Thomas in the face, for he had had some experience of those features in a passion, and would almost as soon have encountered the late Mr. Hastings.

" Conclusive," returned Sir Thomas, angrily ; " yes, it is conclusive enough, and something of the sort will always be conclusive of all my wishes. Those reasons will occur to everybody ; parents, and guardians, confound them, they are so infernally cunning. What is nature of this income that is paid me through you, Mr. Marsden ? "

" My dear Sir Thomas," returned the other, " you must be aware that that is a matter upon which I must preserve a strict silence : why surely—eh,—eh,—what—" he fidgetted in his chair, and became as nearly pale as was possible, that is to say, a sort of tallow colour mottled with red ; for Sir Thomas' expression of countenance was now perfectly demoniac, his forehead was violently flushed, the veins swelling frightfully, and he ground his teeth more like a wild beast than a man :—" why, my dear Sir Thomas, do be quiet—compose yourself," here a wolfish look chilled his very heart—" surely you would not murder me ? "

" Murder my pay-master ! " said Sir Thomas, with a laugh, " no indeed, that would be killing the goose that lays the golden eggs."

" Precisely so," said Mr. Marsden, eagerly, somewhat reassured by the laugh, though that had certainly a strong spice of the hyæna in it, " that's just it ; you have exactly described the state of the case : " and Sir Thomas, with another grim laugh, filled his glass and Mr. Marsden's, " Come Mr. Marsden," said he, " we'll drink my unknown father's health."

" With all heart," said Mr. Marsden.

" WHO IS HE ? " asked Sir Thomas in a voice of thunder, as if he

were hailing the fore-top gallant-mast-head of his own frigate through his speaking trumpet from the taffrail.

"How on earth should I know," replied Mr. Marsden, as if the fore-top gallant-mast-head was answering the hail through the boat-swain's whistle.

"Upon my soul," said Sir Thomas, after a moment of portentous thought, "I have a great mind to adopt you as a father."

"The Lord forbid!" answered Mr. Marsden, again relapsing into nervousness, putting down his glass untasted, and looking at his guest with an expression of countenance in which, "What will he do next?" seemed to predominate.

"You have no family," said Sir Thomas, as if he were about to proceed logically, and saddle Mr. Marsden with paternity by a regular syllogism.

"It is not my fault," answered his host, shrugging his shoulders and looking lack-a-daisical, "Mrs. Hastings would not have me."

"Would not she have you," said Sir Thomas, "did you propose to her?"

"Y-e-s."

"Are you prepared to marry her now?"

"Well, I do not know but what I am."

"Hurrah," said Sir Thomas; "come we have had enough wine, your sister is waiting for us, like Niobe at the tea table,"—and he passed into the drawing room.

"I daresay he would not mind proposing for me, that would be much pleasanter and save me so much trouble," muttered Mr. Marsden, as he locked up the decanters.

That evening passed without any very marked events at Waterproof Lodge. Miss Marsden overwhelmed Sir Thomas with a shower of blandishments, which he shook off like a Newfoundland dog. She sang a great variety of songs, which she thought might find an echo in his heart, such as "Water parted from the Sea," "Black-eyed Susan," "Rule Britannia," and so forth. Her brother, who had evidently been perpending some mighty project in his mind, waited until she had retired, and then proceeded to open his heart to Sir Thomas Horton.

"Sir Thomas," said he, "I lead a very unsettled life."

"Do you, really?" returned the knight, "how long is it since you have been five miles from Waterproof Lodge?"

"I was at Ellesmere four years ago," returned the other, after a moment's consideration, "except that I do not think—but that was not what I meant, I meant that it is time for me to be settled in life."

"Ah, yes, I see," said Sir Thomas with a slight smile, "*you* indulge in those sort of speculations, too, do you?"

"Most men do, do they not?" inquired Mr. Marsden, "there is a time for all things, and for all speculations."

"I suppose so, time governs most things too; I find all my reveries and speculations follow the clock exactly."

"Do they really? well what a singular coincidence," said Mr.

Marsden, rather pleased at finding that he had something in common with his guest, "do you know so do mine, my appetite, I mean."

"When I wake in the morning," continued the other, utterly regardless of Mr. Marsden's physiology, "I immediately become sensibly alive to the comforts and happiness of married life. I long for a wife, the tea-kettle you know, buttered toast, and that sort of thing, then my thoughts turn, as you phrase it, towards settling myself in life."

"Do you wear a night-cap?" asked Mr. Marsden.

"No, it heats my head; I have not had such a thing ever since I got that wound in Ava."

"I does not matter much, I should think," muttered Mr. Marsden.

"Well," continued the other, "those thoughts come away with my beard."

"What, shaving irritates you?" asked Mr. Marsden, who not having ever exactly known his own mind, had a strong desire to know something about that of another.

"Yes," replied Sir Thomas, "the tender passion does not flourish in a tender skin on a frosty morning; then comes breakfast, and after that, my ambitious time, my mind is in a state of great activity, and I long to be a great statesman; you understand."

"Not at all," replied Mr. Marsden, "it must be an immense deal of trouble, unless indeed the office were a sinecure."

"After luncheon," said Sir Thomas, "I become very warlike, and long to fight battles, take, burn, sink, and destroy, according to our instructions; I sometimes kill flies in summer instead."

"Dear me, that's bad digestion—bile—he ought to take some blue pill," said Mr. Marsden to himself.

"After dinner," continued the knight, "I feel that considerations of ease and comfort outweigh all others."

"That's precisely my feeling," interrupted Mr. Marsden, eagerly, "that's just what I find—how delightful it is to live with people who are of the same way of thinking as ourselves."

"After tea," concluded Sir Thomas, "I—I—wish it was to-morrow morning, for I never can get comfortably to sleep at night."

"True," said Mr. Marsden, "besides the evenings are long, especially now that one dines so late, that one has no supper."

"One does not exactly know what to do with the last hour."

"A glass of negus," suggested Mr. Marsden, as he rang the bell, "has a very soothing effect; I daresay you will sleep better for it."

Heat expands all things, and the genial warmth of the negus completed the opening of Mr. Marsden's heart, which he forthwith proceeded to place in Sir Thomas's hand;—a confidence, for which that gentleman, who was well aware of the nature of what is called "beating about the bush," was prepared to receive.

"Sir Thomas," said Mr. Marsden, solemnly, "you are aware that I have already, as yet unsuccessfully, sought Mrs. Hastings's hand: I say as yet unsuccessfully, because I do not conceive that one, two, or more refusals from a lady, are sufficient to make a man of a steadfast mind despair. I probably need not tell you how much each of these refusals not only distressed, but astonished me: I sought long and

anxiously for the cause. I examined and investigated myself and my circumstances, most searchingly and critically; and yet, after the most careful consideration, I was unable to discover, either in myself, or Waterproof Lodge, any valid ground of objection; I say valid, because I consider that on such a subject, a woman of Mrs. Hastings's age must reason—*reason*, Sir Thomas—not rush headlong into the arms of a penniless boy, which the young ones call devotion."

"Perhaps she did not like you," suggested Sir Thomas, with one of his peculiar smiles; "women *do* take such odd fancies and antipathies."

"The long and intimate friendship, that has endured so many years between us, must negative that hypothesis," returned Mr. Marsden, who impressed with a belief that a crisis or epoch in his life was approaching, thought it necessary to rise to the occasion like a hero, and magniloquise his language, (which was about the extent of his heroism, as of that of many others) in proportion to the importance of the period. "The long and intimate friendship that has existed so many years between us, must negative that hypothesis, Sir Thomas—no, I have found the true reason, Sir Thomas," and here he looked at his guest as one who should say, 'after the specimen I have just given you, you will be astonished at what I am going to say:' "the true reason is—I am no orator—no—none—I am no orator, Sir Thomas."

"Very likely not," returned Sir Thomas.

"*Non omnia possumus omnes*, Sir Thomas; you, for instance, can rule a gallant ship—I can for instance—I can—I can—well, never mind, it does not matter what I can do. I know your powers of oratory: now, if you would undertake to plead my cause with Mrs. Hastings, I am convinced that you would be successful."

"If you knew the sort of success with which I pleaded my own cause twenty years ago, you would not impose such a task on me now, my friend," muttered Sir Thomas, "however, there's fun in this matter, if there's nothing else."

"You know," continued Mr. Marsden, "you, besides dilating on the warmth of my affection for her, and its length, you know, you might say a great many little things about me, that I could not so well say of myself; you might just mention that you never saw me in a passion, mightn't you?"

"It would be strictly true, Mr. Marsden," returned Sir Thomas courteously, and then aside, "you never dared be in a passion when I was by."

"And my moral character, Sir Thomas: don't you think you might say something about that?"

"I see," said the other, "no parish officers."

"Oh, no, no, strict morality, and orthodoxy, and sobriety, and then you might hint something about a conservatory, and a closet to put away odds and ends in, and a pony carriage, and grey ponies: I believe that is a sort of thing women like, isn't it?"

"And a boy in buttons," suggested Sir Thomas.

"Yes," said Mr. Marsden, "brass buttons; and then you might insinuate that that widow's cap does not become her: no," continued

he, musingly, "I should like to see her in a handsome turban, shouldn't you."

"With a bird of paradise feather, and a crimson satin gown?" asked Sir Thomas, "she could not resist that, or she is not woman whose name is frailty."

"Her maiden name was Harley," said Mr. Marsden, "perhaps she was a relation of the minister's; well, Sir Thomas, I leave the matter in your hands,"—and he finished the negus like an economical householder who suffers nothing to be lost, and prepared to retire.

"I shall not fail to exert myself to the utmost in your behalf,—you need not be afraid either; a lone woman always wants a protector," returned Sir Thomas, with a grim smile; "and doubt not but that by to-morrow evening I shall have it in my power to congratulate you upon the success of your suit, a success so well deserved by the fidelity that has distinguished it from all other love affairs. Good night, Mr. Marsden, I wish you good rest and pleasant dreams,"—and then, having finished this address, he turned away to light his candle, and expressed his private opinion in a sort of undergrowl to himself,—thus succinctly and briefly, "You d—d fool."

It would be difficult, if not impossible to define the feelings with which Mr. Montague Marsden arose the next morning,—they were a compound of housekeeping and heart-losing, with a dash of misgiving, so he cut himself shaving, dressed in a hurry, and breakfasted in a brown study. It was quite evident that he was thinking a great deal, but he swallowed his tea and toast, and said very little; for past experience had made him extremely desirous of concealing the grand project of the day from his sister, who had hitherto instinctively foreseen each attempt of Mr. Marsden's to change his condition, and whether she thought for him that it was well to let well alone, or for herself, that two suns, or perhaps to attain more figurative correctness we ought to say two moons, could not co-exist in the Waterproof hemisphere,—had sedulously, though unsuccessfully, set herself against any such proceedings on his part. As yet, the circumstance of Mrs. Hastings apparently taking a somewhat similar view of the matter, had answered all the young lady's purpose, though that circumstance was to her a riddle that she could not solve; she knew very well that no man would have had an opportunity of repeating an offer for her own hand, a fourth time or a third time, or a second time, for obvious reasons connected with the first time of asking, and as she read others hearts out of her own, she did by no means understand Mrs. Hastings's refusal; she knew that she was steeped to the lips in poverty, from which lips the magic monosyllable Yes, would have at once and for ever extricated her; for not only was Mr. Marsden in comfortable circumstances, but, if not absolutely liberal, (which is an *active* quality), he was indifferent about money matters. Expense neither weighed upon his mind nor pressed upon his means; his money came easy and went easy,—comfort was all he wanted or expected from money, that was his idea in the matter, a five pound note and a well constructed arm chair being placed before his eyes, he would have reasoned that a man might enjoy a comfortable nap in the arm chair and not on the five pound note, and

chosen the former accordingly—which the upholsterer would have probably considered an admirable choice; he could watch with the most intense interest, the fattening of a hog, the growth of cauliflowers, or the decanting of a bottle of port, but the accumulation of his surplus income, only gave him the trouble of considering how he should invest it, and Miss Marsden very well knew and took it for granted that Mrs. Hastings also knew, that whatever settlements that lady chose to demand, she most assuredly would obtain, and this circumstance of course increased her wonder at the apparent self-denial of the widow. The idea of her refusing Mr. Marsden, simply because she did not and could not love him, never once entered her mind; however, she recollected the old proverb of the pitcher that goes often to the well, and comes home broken at last, and judging that it was always possible that Mr. Marsden might propose once too often (for her convenience) lost no opportunity of decrying the project. Sometimes she hinted at the probable existence of the late Mr. Hastings, and his possible re-appearance from the wilds of South America, or the wastes of Central Asia, or the Isle of Kangaroos, appropriated to the patriots who “left their country for the country’s good.” New Zealand also came in as a locality for the long-lost husband, whence he might return with a good deal of tattooing, a great indifference to the shedding of man’s blood, and rather a taste for his flesh; and she placed a terrible picture before her brother’s eyes of a cannibal colleague in his matrimonial adventure; at other times, she read out to him from the newspapers divers entertaining, and interesting trials for bigamy, leaving him to deduce the moral from them, conjecturing that it would occur to his mind that, bad as the trouble of being married would be, that of being unmarried again would only double it; and as if she judged that even these little romances, which she was pleased to construct about the poor widow, were not sufficient, she would sometimes try another tack, and insinuate that Mrs. Hastings could not be a widow, for the simple reason that she never had been a wife, altogether she entered so little into Mr. Marsden’s views upon the subject that he bethought himself of the remark of the Governor of Tilbury in the play, when addressing his love-sick daughter, who anticipated the arrival of the Armada.

“The Spanish fleet thou canst not see, because
It is not yet in sight;”

and kept the aforesaid views carefully out of her sight, and in this instance so successfully that this morning, she presided in perfect unconsciousness at the breakfast table, little dreaming what a day might bring forth, and made tea for the two conspirators as if there was not a widow in the world.

Sir Thomas sat with the most profound calmness, and watched Mr. Marsden with much of the quiet, complacent, self-enjoyment that characterises the last stage of companionship between a cat and a mouse, every now and then, he cast a glance at Miss Marsden, indicative of the amusement it afforded him to contemplate her utter unconsciousness of the mine he was about to spring under her feet, in which glances satisfaction so completely predominated that the young lady took it for granted that they conveyed the expression of the admiration for which she had waited so long and patiently, and blushed, bridled and

simpered accordingly. However, even Desdemona was subjected to household cares, and so was Miss Marsden, and she at last retired from the breakfast room.

"Well, Mr. Marsden," said Sir Thomas, with an ambiguous subacid sort of smile, "the time approaches, we must clear for action,—how do you feel?"

"Upon my conscience," returned that gentleman, "I believe I am very nervous, ain't you?"

"You should not suffer yourself to feel nervous in these little matters," said Sir Thomas encouragingly.

"It is not so easy to help it, is it?" returned the Cælebs in search of a widow.

"Yes—Philosophy," said Sir Thomas, as if it were the simplest matter in the world, "only reflect, what is happiness?—perfection?"

"I dare say it is," returned Mr. Marsden, who so long as he acquiesced, did not judge it necessary to follow the flights of his companion, "I dare say it is,—at all events, it ought to be."

"Yes," said Sir Thomas, "it is not the only thing that ought to be, but that is not—well, you *cannot* attain perfection."

"Very likely not, I never tried," returned Mr. Marsden, who judged that that point was not to be attained without considerable labour.

"Then there is no use troubling your head about it," urged Sir Thomas.

"Very true," said Mr. Marsden, "not the slightest."

"In that case," continued the knight, "the next best thing is utter recklessness,—then you know once you have acquired that, it does not matter a farthing to you whether you are wrong or right."

"Ah, I see," said Mr. Marsden, rubbing his chin in a deep thinking sort of manner.

"That is the great point to attain," continued Sir Thomas, "a rough-hided don't-care-a-damniness is the true philosophy for the world."

"Sir Thomas, you were never in love?" remarked Mr. Marsden in a pathetic and benedictine tone.

"I should like to know what you know about love," returned his wayward friend, so savagely as to make Mr. Marsden's person undulate as if several waves of fat passed in succession over his exterior, "What is your idea of love?—of marriage?"

"Marriage," said Mr. Marsden, blinking the former question, "marriage, it's—it's having a wife,—don't you know: now for example, just as we are situated now, don't you see, whilst you are here,—I mean whilst a stranger is staying at Waterproof Lodge,—my sister is always thinking of nothing but how she may make herself agreeable to him. Now, on the other hand, if I were married, my wife would always be thinking of nothing but how she might make herself agreeable to me,—don't you see the distinction?"

"Perfectly," returned Sir Thomas, "that is a most profound observation of yours," (aside, 'if bathos constitutes profundity.')

"Particularly," continued the other, rather flattered by the deference accorded to his views, "a religious woman like Mrs. Hastings,—they make the best of wives, they give no trouble, and do what they are bid."

"Very sound reasoning," returned Sir Thomas. "In the mean time I think I had better proceed upon my embassy."

"I think so too," said Mr. Marsden, "for if she makes any delay, you will hardly be back in time for luncheon."

"So you will not tell me who my father is, Mr. Marsden?" muttered Sir Thomas, with a grim smile, as he left the lodge.

Notwithstanding the almost contemptuous coolness with which Sir Thomas Horton had treated Mr. Marsden's suit, its progress and result, he had hardly left the house before he exhibited symptoms of being agitated by some violent emotion. "He is a very remarkable jackass, this Mr. Montague Marsden," muttered he to himself: "this woman, of whom with one exception I never saw the equal, he appreciates no more than if she were nothing more than a motherly old house-keeper, to have dinner ready in time, the hog;—to pet and pamper him, the hound;—to warm his slippers for him—I should like to see the devil's dam warming his slippers for him. And yet how many men are there like him, mere clods of the earth, earthy; strange it is that a glimpse of the true light should be given to so few—so few, and at such long intervals; aye, they, the far seers, whom the glowing East alone comprehends, whose feet are on the world of darkness, whose back is to the world of illusion; but whose face is turned towards the everlasting world of truth,—yet has the East lost that truth. I recollect that faquir that was held to have attained such progress in absorption, who had stood so long motionless that the ivy had grown up to his waist, and the birds had built their nests in his hair: *knew* he more than others? no; the universe is motion, and man is motion misdirected; (here he broke out into a wild laugh,) and Mr. Marsden is as about as misdirected as ever was astrologer or alchemist: he might as well try to transmute metals as to transmute her into Mrs. Marsden. It would be glorious if it could be done: I should attend the christening of her first child, and bring another godfather with me—such a godfather, ha! ha!—but it cannot; I know her better; she never would marry him. So, I shall take the liberty of paying him off for refusing to tell me who I am:—Who am I? I'm sure I don't know. Well," and here he rubbed his head, "I must go to the East, nevertheless, I must get back that bit of my skull."

Sir Thomas returned to Waterproof Lodge in good time for luncheon, and communicated the result of his mission to Mr. Marsden in the shape of a congratulation upon its success, whereby that gentleman was thrown into a state of pleasurable excitement that it would be impossible to describe:—something between a mayor newly knighted, and a dog delighted at getting hold of and eager to swallow, but afraid of burning his mouth with an over-hot piece of meat. He had his doubts, too, suggested by the colossal importance of the step he was taking, a step which seemed to him to be made with seven-leagued boots at the very least.

"What diplomatic talents you have, Sir Thomas," said he; "I really do not know how to thank you for concluding in a few hours, a matter that has occupied me so many years: I shall go over immediately after luncheon to thank Mrs. Hastings."

"By no means, my dear Sir," said Sir Thomas, "she expressly stipulated that she was to be allowed four-and-twenty hours to collect her thoughts. It was such a shock, you know."

"Was it?" asked Mr. Marsden, somewhat bewildered, "why? how a shock?"

"Oh, like the shock of a shower-bath, you know," returned the other, "startling at first, but very delightful afterwards; it is a classical allusion: Jupiter, you know, descended on one occasion in a shower of gold."

"Ah, settlements," sighed Mr. Marsden, interminable trouble rising in spectral parchments before his eyes, "well, it shows her delicacy."—and forth he went to walk by himself, think of himself, and talk to himself, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy.

"That was a splendid move of mine, getting Clara away," soliloquised he. "I hope she will not require much time before the marriage: I'm sure I wish it was over."

It has been said that many young ladies for the first year after their marriage, can never look at one of their own sex without a peculiar sort of expression on their countenance of a compassionate curiosity, arising out of a conscious superiority, as much as to say, "Are you a married woman? if you are not —" and certainly Mr. Marsden this day did not meet any man, woman, boy or girl, without both looking and thinking something of the sort; and happening to meet the clerk of the parish, he made such particular enquiries as to the manner of solemnising matrimony, that that person considered himself justified in spreading all over the parish, the report that Mr. Marsden was going to be married; a species of report, for which we all know, little of any justification is ever considered necessary. On his return, he was somewhat gratified by Sir Thomas informing him, that he found it necessary to take his departure the next morning; for, albeit not of an ambitious or vain-glorious temperament, Mr. Montague Marsden, in common with many others, (who would not be pleased at being told so) felt that no inconsiderable part of an achievement was the triumph attending it, and was by no means sorry, now he had no farther use for him, to get rid of Sir Thomas Horton, who might with some justice have claimed some share in the glory, and whose eccentricities, being about as easily fore-calculated as the figures in a kaleidoscope, kept the solid Mr. Marsden in a tremulous jelly-like state of nervous fussiness.

CHAPTER XVI.

Tired and exhausted as the young ladies were who had been so abruptly unhoused by the destruction of Avonmore, it may well be supposed that they still did not indulge in very lengthened slumbers: the events of the night before, had too much agitated them, and it was little past ten when Lady Madelaine entered the room where Clara, overcome alike with fatigue and terror, still slept. She had arrived at Avonmore early the morning before, completely worn out by a boisterous sixteen hours' passage from Liverpool to Dublin, and by having passed the night in the mail; for her novel position, travelling by herself, and unprotected among strangers, had so frightened her, that she considered no sacrifice or exertion too great to get to her journey's end, and find herself once more in a home, even though a new and strange one, little dreaming whom or what she was to encounter there. She had, however, over-calculated her own strength: a restless night was followed by a feverish day, and so completely was she weakened, both in body and mind, that happening by accident to see Henry, of whose presence in the house she was unaware, although she was not ignorant that his regiment was stationed somewhere in the neighbourhood, the sight and the perplexity to which it gave rise, threw her into a state of nervous emotion almost hysterical, in the course of which, the kind and friendly attention of Lady Madelaine, so far won upon her as to acquire her fullest confidence much more rapidly than it would otherwise have been given.

There was something in the gentle soothing manner of Lady Madelaine, that stole insensibly into her heart: there was something in her very eye that inspired feelings of an affectionate confidence: it was not only a kind eye and a mild eye, but it was a true honest eye, sympathy was there to overflow, but it appeared as if with the will to aid, there was not less the power, for Lady Madelaine looked as if whilst she could give tears, where tears were due, she could also, if need were, give advice and support, and it was with feelings of no little gratitude that Clara found in her a friend, and such a friend in the family of which she had so recently become a member. Perhaps her confidence came the more rapidly because it was unsought, for though Lady Madelaine at first wished to ascertain what was the immediate cause of her emotion, supposing that she had seen or heard something that startled or distressed her in her unaccustomed position, of which she might prevent the recurrence, she by no means attempted to penetrate into the secret springs that moved the lonely girl's heart, and nothing could exceed her surprise when, impelled partly by the sense of desolate helplessness, natural to one so young, now separated for the first time from her home, that prompted her to accept thankfully, the friendly sympathy thus almost unexpectedly offered to her, and partly by the consideration that it was little desirable that her first

appearance at Avonmore should be marked by a mystery, which she would not explain, she consulted both her feelings and her judgment, by confiding fully and fearlessly, to Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine, the circumstances under which she had last parted with Harry Mowbray.

There was something in her whole conduct in that matter that so entirely harmonised with the views entertained by Lady Madelaine on the subject, and something not less attractive in her artless confidence, that in that hurried conversation was laid the foundation of a lasting friendship : a friendship, not the mere fancy of the moment, or the effect of their being thrown together by circumstances, but one in which affection was firmly and enduringly based in esteem and admiration, and it was this that accounted for the character of her conversation with Henry immediately before the outbreak that followed Mr. Wilkins' appearance as a ghost, a conversation in which he had been so puzzled by the obscurely hinted at, and partially developed knowledge, she had exhibited about some part of his private history, and also by the interest she took in his welfare, which he was not aware was in Lady Madelaine's mind at that time, and thenceforward inseparably associated with Clara Hastings.

It was not however with mere ordinary feelings of ordinary compassion that the high-born lady looked upon the friendless girl, who now for the first time in her life far from home, its security and its love, still slept heavily, as one outworn and exhausted alike both in body and mind. The Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine, with all the outward glitter that rank, birth, wealth, and beauty could give, had yet a secret sorrow gnawing at her heart,—she also knew what it was to love and to love in vain. Four years before her affections had been irrecoverably given to one whom fortune seemed to have chosen expressly for the purpose of showering on him gifts and abilities, solely that they might be turned against himself and others. Gay, without the slightest craving for the ordinary unmeaning frivolities of gaiety, accomplished yet without the pride of accomplishment, well-born and well-bred, popular alike with men and women, the true popularity that only belongs to manliness, possessed of that singular versatility of mind that enabled him to converse equally with a bishop or a roué, a lawyer or a soldier, a saint or a sinner, and to harmonize his conversation to the language and the spirit both of the profession and character of the individual, George Eversfield, a near relation of her own, had so completely adopted the tone of Lady Madelaine's mind, had so entirely fallen into her way of thinking, that it was not wonderful that, as day after day, his character seemed to develop itself in his conversation, she imagined that the image thus apparently confidently displayed to her view was his mind, when in fact it was but the fleeting reflection of her own, and unconsciously suffered what the noble bard of Newstead truly calls, 'the credulous hope of mutual minds,' to steal away her love. Yet George Eversfield was not radically bad, he was not perhaps at heart more selfish than his neighbours, but his talents enabled him to gratify and pamper his selfishness more largely and with more injury to the feelings of others than many whose care of themselves was fully as watchful as his. Heart hardened, by being petted and spoiled,

by somebody else : the dens of infamy in which he had formerly sought a satanic excitement, were abandoned to the loathsome vermin that infest them : a deeper sense of moral responsibility rapidly established itself, and took root in his mind, and his reformation, as well as his sincere attachment to Lady Madelaine, became so apparently complete, that when Lord Ellesmere's attention was called to the subject his decision was, that the matter might take its course.

Every day, too, he became dearer to Lady Madelaine, for though, ignorant of his former grosser vices, which, had she known of them, would have shocked her to such a degree, as to ensure their connection being immediately broken off, she had considered him, before a tenderer feeling sprung up in her heart, as a lamentable instance of great talents, good disposition, and excellent qualities, perverted and uncultivated : she saw that her influence was, gradually but still rapidly, turning to good, what, if not absolutely turned to evil, was at all events, a waste and desolate wilderness : she felt as if her hand was moulding a mixed and chaotic mass of gold, and iron, and brass, and clay, into a beautiful and costly image that all might admire : and she had towards him the feeling that the Scottish maiden might be supposed to have experienced when a grisly monster craved of her a boon of the sign of the cross.

But wist I of a maiden bold,
That thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine.

She crossed him once, she crossed him twice,
That maiden was so brave,
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that maiden bold :
He rose beneath her hand,
The fairest knight in Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethred Brand.

But the pride of the preserver in the rescued object is a subtle influence, emanation though it be of heavenly love, it easily and readily finds a home in the earth : it creeps insensibly from the soul to the heart, and the heart of Lady Madelaine was not hardened against such impressions : she loved, she trusted ; and when the terrible morning came—the morning that gave her the first glimpse of the black gulf of misery and despair, that the unsubstantial crust of earthly prosperity covers, but which adversity with one stroke discloses, and she was told that the events of the passed night had sent George Eversfield out alone into the wide world, a dishonoured pauper, and an unpitied exile, she answered the tale with an abrupt and vehement denial of its possibility. It was, however, too true ; the one cherished vice, that like Aaron's rod, first turns into a serpent to eat up the other serpents, and remains itself only to become once more a scourge, the

vice that success strengthens, and ill-fortune hardens, Gambling still clung to the unhappy man, and one fatal night, the fiend's choicest and most deadly bait, the untameable craving to "win back," lured him to his destruction, and left him not only absolutely and irretrievably ruined, but involved, moreover, in an amount of debt beyond the value of his fortune, which he had not the remotest prospect of ever discharging.

After that night he was seen no more. Where he had vanished to no one knew; all that remained of him was an instrument authorising one of his friends to dispose of his whole property, and divide it as fairly as possible among his creditors, and a note to Lady Madelaine, in which, bitterly reproaching himself for the selfishness with which he had intruded himself upon affections, which he knew he had not stability of character either to deserve or to retain, and assuring her that nothing but the higher tone to which his mind had been elevated, partially, it is true, but still somewhat, by his intercourse with a being of a superior order like her, prevented his seeking the hideous refuge of the suicide; he entreated her to think no more of him, as she would assuredly see him no more; and from that day all traces of him disappeared: his memory faded away, but it still lived in her heart, for she was of a noble nature and a constant mind,—the love she had given him was not the cool calculation of a cold heart, proceeding upon the mathematics of morality to compute the exact value of its object's good qualities, and also of his opposite ones, and having ascertained by subtraction, that there is a balance in favour of the former, fall in love with the remainder, and marries upon arithmetic,—hers was otherwise: it was love, love that the folly or vice of one unhappy night could not sweep away like the figures on a slate, and if she did not nourish a secret hope, that after a time he might return, penitent and to be forgiven; still it was clear that no other image could supplant him in her heart: she had refused three advantageous matches; nor did her parents press her when she declined the last, a young Viscount of large property and unexceptionable character. Lord Ellesmere merely kissed her pale forehead, and murmured to himself, "Poor girl." A tear stood in her mother's eye, but it was neither disappointed ambition, nor baffled art; it was womanly sympathy: the matter passed, and was heard of no more; and it was the instinct of a fellow-sufferer that had so rapidly enlisted her interest in behalf of Clara, whose unhappiness, moreover, she respected the more, insomuch as it was a voluntary and martyrlly sacrifice to principle, and not the unavoidable course of uncontrollable events like her own. Clara at last awoke, and after a few words of affectionate inquiry, Lady Madelaine left her, and when her toilette was complete, the two descended together to the breakfast-room.

Here they found Mr. Fitzgerald in his glory, or rather hovering round it, for his glory was not quite complete until Lady Madelaine arrived: he evidently thought,

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
That taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,"

and as clearly considered that his tide was at the flood, spring-tides

and a lee-shore into the bargain, and was gallantly prepared to avail himself of the "opening" that the refuge the Ellesmere family found in his house, left him. Warned by his mishap in the park, which a reference to his looking-glass, when dressing for dinner, had disclosed to his horrified eyes the same evening, what little dependance could be placed on the stability of lamp-black, he had on this occasion left his eyebrows and their naked beauty unadorned, but when Lady Madelaine entered the room, she became aware of an unusual expansion and loftiness in his forehead, which struck her as being different from what she had been accustomed to; she could not account for it, but Lady Sarah, less scrupulous, and more ready-witted, had already fathomed the mystery, and scarcely had Clara and she entered the room when she ran up and whispered, "Do look, Madelaine, Mr. Fitzgerald has shaved off all the hair from his temples, to give him an intellectual expression, and all for your sake: how proud you must be."

The fact was so, but a suppressed smile was all the notice that circumstances admitted of being taken of it at the moment, and when Lady Sarah had satisfied herself that Clara had slept well, had caught no cold, had been supplied with clothes, and wanted nothing that she could do or get for her, she suffered her to sit down to breakfast. But if the flood that was to float Mr. Fitzgerald into the haven of fortune, had set in, something of an eddy seemed to have set in with it, a cross-grained current that carried him against the tide. He, of course, with the intention of availing himself of it, led off gallantly, with the display of his whole stock of accomplishments and attractions. Two or three well selected books lay in different parts of the room, open at well selected places, as if they formed the natural recreation of his leisure hours, and had just been thrown down carelessly, that morning, or the day before, at the spot where he had been reading. (Lady Madelaine did not look at them.) A flute lay upon the window-sill, to indicate that he had a soul for music. (Lady Madelaine never saw it.) His sisters were prepared to pour forth his praises with a manner, that in rapidity and quantity, could only be compared to the shooting of gravel out of a cart: he himself was primed and loaded, for he had recently and carefully studied a certain comprehensive work, well known as one of the heavier tools of the trade to those who love to shine in conversation by the careful preparation of impromptus, and named with an unhappy alliteration, "Elegant Extracts." Directing his attention solely to those articles which treat of the tender passion, he had culled from this refuge for the destitute sweet thoughts, lovely reflections, touching sentiments, flashes of passion, gleams of nature, and other delicacies of advertising criticism, wherewith he heavily shot his discourse; but his *Batterie d'amour* did but little execution, it had not got the range. Lady Madelaine was not in the mood "to be so pestered by a popinjay;" the revelations that Clara had made the day before, had so recalled the recollections of her own unhappy love, as well as awakened her compassion for Clara, that she was disgusted at the burlesque grotesqueness of the image of love, which Mr. Fitzgerald's vanity persuaded him to obtrude upon her. Of all this, however, Lady Sarah was ignorant, and she settling in her

own mind that "Madelaine was cross," amused herself by encouraging Mr. Fitzgerald to go on making a fool of himself, until, having fooled him to the top of his bent, at last the patter-potter wishy-washy, everlasting flood of his wearisome eloquence so completely overflowed the borders of Lady Madelaine's patience, that she turned suddenly and sharply upon him, with an earnestness of retort that might almost have been called savageness, (and would have been called so, if it had come from the lips of an old maid,) that, if we may use such an expression, "Struck him all of a heap:"—a heap of reflections upon the incomprehensibility of womankind in general, and Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine in particular, and elicited from his sisters the muttered remark, "Set her up with her consate."

From her he had no more expected a sharp answer than from the picture of his worthy father the distiller, which hung over the mantelpiece in the uniform of the ——— Volunteers. Lady Sarah was delighted; she decided that the burning castle had communicated some of its own fire to her sister's disposition, which in her opinion it very much wanted; and she next applied herself to consoling Mr. Fitzgerald after his rebuff, with such success as very nearly to bring him to her feet as an admirer. This, however, was not a scene likely to last long, the zest wore off, for quizzing like champagne soon loses its effervescence, the tiresome obtrusiveness of their host and high-flying vulgarity of his sisters, became, after a short time, intolerable, and the young ladies were fain to plead fatigue, nervousness, letters to write, and such like feminine disorders, as an excuse for retiring to their own rooms. Here Clara had an opportunity of becoming better and better acquainted with Lady Sarah, and though the difference of character between the two sisters was at once apparent, still there was a frank-hearted *espieglerie* in the younger that was very attractive, whilst towards her own especial charge, an affectionate intelligent girl of twelve years old; she already began to feel a deep and kindly interest. Altogether she was by this time fully aware of her good fortune in having her lot cast in such a family, and but for one cause would have soon become happy in her new home. That one cause however was fatal.

In the course of the day, it was arranged to the great delight of all three, that the ladies should, as soon as possible, depart for Ellesmere, the family seat in England. Lord de Creci remaining behind with Lord William. Both these gentlemen had established themselves in that part of the offices that had escaped the flames, and agreeing in a holy horror of Mr. Fitzgerald, and the whole of his order, viz. the tribe of Buckeens, the ladies saw no more of them during their stay in that country, which was not very long.

CHAPTER XVII.

THERE is one difficulty which those who devote themselves to the chronicling of heroes, heroines and their dependencies, share with pig drivers, viz. the keeping the personages under their conduct and guidance together, a difficulty that weighs heavy upon contemporary literature, the ultimate destination of so many of whose *dramatis personæ* is (barring unpleasant accidents at home) Botany Bay. However, we are not going to introduce our readers to an iron gang, that we leave to others, whose name, just now, is legion, better qualified by a natural turn for the subject, ; but still a considerable change of latitude and longitude is expedient to the due understanding of our history, and we must ask our readers to perform half the task so liberally promised by Puck,

" To put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes :"

And imagine themselves with us at the Antipodes.

The scene to which we must transport ourselves is a romantically situated harbour in New Zealand ; a deep lonely bay, almost entirely land-locked, surrounded by lofty hills richly wooded, and entered by an entrance so narrow as to make it extremely difficult for a vessel to find, or after she has found it, to work either in or out, except under peculiarly favourable circumstances of wind and tide. To the northward, a singular entrance is indeed, in fine weather, practicable for canoes, viz. a lofty opening through a perforated rock in the form of a gothic arch, and close to its western shores, a group of fantastic crags rising in jagged irregular pyramids shut out all farther view. Innumerable cascades tumble down their rugged sides and lose themselves in a wilderness of shrubs and trees which rise between them and the water. Every thing was in its fullest bloom, green and flowering ; for it is to be remembered that New year's day in New Zealand is Midsummer. Nature had done much for the harbour of Wairangoa, and man in his own peculiar way had done rather more, for on every side burned villages, destroyed houses, shattered enclosures, and a few human bones still bleaching on the deserted beach, bore evidence of the character of a visit made to that place about three years before by E Ongi, a mighty warrior among the New Zealanders. The sea seemed as deserted as the shore, some remains of timbers of the Boyd, whose calamitous, though not altogether undeserved fate, had given Wairangoa a bad eminence among shores of very indifferent repute, still remained, but the long canoes of the natives had vanished. A boat belonging to the vessel that was anchored in the bay, lay on the waters, and on the shore a group of three men were all of the human kind that were to be seen.

The first of these was a sailor, stout in person, rough, sturdy, and some-



what bloated, bearing the evident marks of habitual indulgence, if not intemperance, in his pimpled but weather-beaten countenance,—but for which he would have been a handsome if not distinguished looking man. There was however in him still an air of self-possession and almost command, as if he had been a gentleman once, and had not quite forgotten it, even in his present character of second mate to a South Sea trader; an air that contrasted strongly with that of his companion, who looked exactly as if he had once lost eighteen pence, and had been thinking of nothing but how to gain it back again ever since; cunning and avarice had drawn some pretty deep lines on his features, ardent spirits had etched a few strokes of their own also, but there was none of the good fellowship apparent in him, that appeared in the open countenance of the other; he seemed a screwing trader, and a sneaking companion, a sort of man that would hide away his bottle at the approach of a friend; but having lived some time in the country, and picked up enough of the language to drive a bargain, and enough knowledge of their customs to enable him to see when it was time to make preparations against being cooked and eaten, as occasionally befell his predecessors, he was useful, if not necessary to his companion, whose vessel was taking on a cargo of spars, flax, and, as we shall see, something more. The third of this group was one of nature's own gentlemen, for art had touched him but little and improved him less, though the chisel had been as profusely employed on his person as on the Apollo Belvidere, till, as the sailor observed, take him bow on or quarter on, stem on or stern on, you saw nothing but tattooing, as indeed was the case; he being a chief of very high rank, who was expected by his tribe to dress well, according to their peculiar notions; and the decorations of his person were, after all, not very much more ornamental than the patches our great-grand-mothers used to distribute over their faces. On this occasion, however, he considered it necessary to conform in some degree to European notions of dress, and accordingly he wore a pair of canvas trousers, a garment of many colours, from tar, paint, and whale oil, and profusely embroidered by patching. This was rather to be taken as the sign and token of the advance of civilization towards New Zealand, than as the actual fact of its presence there; for he wore them round his neck, but still that was something: the proverb says, get in the point of the wedge, and the back will follow, and the probability in that, the yet uneaten part of the community have made great advances in civilization and culottism since that time. A dilapidated top boot completed his costume of ceremony; unless, indeed, a few feathers stuck in his head may be considered as essential to full dress as they are among the fair frequenters of the court here, his however were gannet's, not ostrich.

This gentleman sat in a primitive manner, much resembling, if our memory be correct, the attitude of one of the figures upon those martyred saints, the original postage envelopes; close to him was the article of traffic he had brought with him, and his eyes wandered from it to the two Europeans, with some little distrust, more curiosity, and a most exceeding desire to imitate every action of theirs.

The business which brought this conclave together was commerce,

that is to say, a demand having arisen in the London curiosity market for New Zealanders' heads, it must of course be supplied, and a contract had been entered into with this chief, as one of the most redoubtable warriors, to supply the good ship, the *Albatross*, with a hundred of these grim groceries. The man had certainly intended to fulfil his contract scrupulously, but an unforeseen difficulty arose. The sack was expected to be equal to the sample, and the sample having been that of a great warrior whose whole tribe had been utterly exterminated. (an important point, as we shall hereafter see) was of course a first rate article, the difficulty lay in finding a sufficient number of the same quality. The heads of the people were common enough, but they were neither sufficiently tattooed nor skilfully smoked; many of them besides were considerably the worse for wear, having been kicked about by the children, playful dears; care had not been bestowed upon them dead or alive to fit them for a market so enlightened or so fastidious as that of London, and those of the upper classes were not to be had at any price. Heads enough in the country there were in all conscience, in every village the heads on poles equalled the heads on shoulders, whilst others innumerable lurked in the recesses of the tombs; but, alas, every head was either a trophy or an heir-loom. The latter of course was not to be alienated, family pride forbade any such proceeding, and was much strengthened and supported in its hereditary obstinacy by the firm conviction that any such disrespect to their ancestors, would most assuredly call down the spirit of the deceased nobleman, in the shape of a lizard, to devour the interior of the seller. As to the former, the trophies of great deeds, the heads of enemies cut off in war, that was equally out of the question. Touch a trophy, indeed. The sandal-wood gates of the temple of Somnauth would not have been half so great a loss to the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahmoud, as would have been these cherished relics to the military pride of a New Zealand tribe; that was not to be thought of: and there was another objection to parting with these heads. It is obvious that in a country where there are generally twelve or fourteen wars going on, there must occasionally be treaties of peace, such as it is; arising commonly from two hostile tribes having, though not without some little natural jealousies occasionally breaking out, arrived at the perception of their true interests being best secured by the blessings of peace, that is to say by abandoning their own private animosities, and forming a strict alliance together, for the purpose of butchering and eating a third tribe. Upon these occasions, writing not being considered the natural use of hands in New Zealand, the treaty is commonly ratified by an interchange of heads, each party sending to their new allies its love and whatever of their ancestors' or friends' heads it had in its possession, a practice from which the term "capitulation," now much applied to treaties, is probably etymologically derived. It seems to correspond to the interchange of prisoners, snuff-boxes, ribbons, ratifications, and those sort of things that accompany European treaties; though in England, perhaps, the interchange that attracts most notice in connection with a treaty, is the interchange of abuse between the government and the opposition. Now it was obvious that under these circumstances the possession of these heads, by

giving the party who retained them something to concede, gave it a great advantage in antipodal diplomacy. The statesmen of the Pacific Ocean were fully aware of the value of heads in negotiation, and accordingly when the worthy contractor commenced his search for them, he found the disposable stock on hand quite insufficient to meet the demand that had sprung up, from the intercourse of his country with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Bringing therefore eighteen or twenty of them, which were now placed in three rows, between him and the two Christians, he pointed to them, as demonstrating his good intentions and honesty of purpose, and declaring that there was not enough of the ready-made article in the country, demanded a prolongation of time, for manufacturing it. This demand being on the face of it reasonable and proper, and moreover satisfactory, as shewing a singleness of heart and willingness to be bound by his contract, unusual among the Polynesian races, was of course granted; and the sailor seemed inclined to grant his next request, which seemed as reasonable, viz. for an advance of the tools that were to enable him to perform it, that is to say arms and ammunition. This, however, the more experienced trader overruled.

"No, no, Mr. Hastings," said he, "that will never do. These fellows never do execution with fire-arms; they hide themselves in holes and keep popping at one another for days together, without venturing to shew themselves, and there won't be a man hit, where formerly they went at it hammer and tongs, and probably three-fourths of the beaten party were cut up on the spot. No, no, Sir: we'll give him plenty of tomahawks—that's the tool for them to work with. They'll cut a man down with one of their own merais or a tomahawk, even when they are rubbing noses with him. Besides when they do get a gun, they spoil it in a fortnight, by cleaning the lock, and taking it to pieces, which idles them. Fire-arms are putting an end to war here."

"Just as you think best, Mr. Lester," returned the other, preparing to light a cigar. "The great thing is to get the heads; but tell him that they must be got against May."

"You see," observed Mr. Lester, "there is another great objection to giving these fellows fire-arms, if you want them to do anything for you; and that is that the barrels are all cast iron; in some places they are not thicker than a sixpence, and they are very apt to burst and kill the man that fires them—who is your man, don't you see?"

"Then they are the only things in these seas that have the slightest idea of law and justice," returned the other, laughing. "By-the-by, explain to him that they must be properly dried."

Mr. Lester explained this, and received the satisfactory answer that they should be delivered in prime shipping condition to the white devil, such being the complimentary name by which the early missionaries taught the natives to designate all Europeans who were not connected with the missions—and the party rose to separate. As they stood up, Mr. Hastings lit a lucifer match to light a cigar with, to the unbounded astonishment of the native, who by no means understood the drawing fire, as it appeared to him to be, from a bit of wood. It was repeated once or twice, to amuse him, and having gravely enquired

whether the white devil also carried thunder and lightning about with him, and received an answer in the affirmative from the voracious Mr. Lester, he took his departure, and the two Europeans, with their recent purchase, got into the boat and pulled out to the ship, which they very nearly had to themselves, for the greater part of the crew were up in the woods cutting kowry spars, for the completion of her cargo, &c. They spent the rest of the day pleasantly enough; Mr. Lester amusing himself with beating a New Zealand girl, a local and temporary wife who lived on board, and Mr. Hastings, with the help of tobacco and spirits, making out his time pretty well also, until near sun-set, when an unfortunate observation of Lester's disturbed the serenity, produced by the conjoint influence of the cigars and grog, on Hastings' mind, and led to still more unfortunate consequences hereafter.

The latter gentleman, having got through a considerable quantity of rum, with some water in it, was sitting, in a state of very dreamy satisfaction, looking at nothing and thinking of it. His island wife, who was devotedly attached to him, for some instinct of the gentleman that yet survived in his breast made him treat her with kindness, crouched by his side, on the other was the bottle and glass, and altogether he was particularly comfortable, and looked as if he was by no means inclined to be disturbed. His companion, without any particular business that any one could have discovered, had two or three times dived below, and returned each time with his eyes rather glistening and his nose rather glimmering, and at last he came and sat down, leaning against the binnacle, opposite Hastings, looking very sentimental and smelling of rum.

"What a glorious sun-set," observed he. "How splendidly the orb of day sets in the bosom of the night."

"Does it," answered the other, scarcely moving his lips and not at all his eyes.

"I never see the sun or the everlasting glories of (hiccup) nature, but I feel what a grievous sinner I am," continued Lester. "I am,—all are,—we are,—you are—sinners—sinners—sinners—"

"I don't doubt but what you are a capital judge of the article, so I suppose I am," returned the other, half closing his eyes.

"Suppose; the Lord have mercy on us. Suppose—I know it, I know it—I exhort you to repentance," continued the religious Lester, who was in fact almost drunk. "Repent, repent; though your sins be as scarlet, aye, bad as even yours are, and I know what they are." Here the other suddenly opened his eyes, fixed them with a boding and ominous expression upon the speaker, who was however too exalted at the moment to observe it. "I know how you found your way to this part of the world; but repent, leave off drinking,—(hiccup)—dismiss that woman, swear no more: repent, I say, my beloved brother."

"Keep your fore-paws to yourself, you hound," answered his beloved brother,—for Mr. Lester occasionally endeavoured to enforce his eloquence by slapping him on the knee, "and if ever you have the insolence to call me your brother again, I'll wring your pious neck for you."

Mr. Lester was somewhat startled and entirely silenced by this

rebuff, and in a few minutes more might be seen once more making his way down the companion, probably to give his poor throat some consolation for the threat that had been directed at it. As he departed the eyes of Hastings fixed savagely upon him.

"You know, do you," muttered he, "what drove me from my home, my rank, my —" — he paused for a moment, and looked at the dusky form that leaned against his. "If you do, my fine fellow, it will be convenient to put a stopper on your jaw, and I know only one way to do that. Dead dogs don't bite."

The holy and thirsty Lester soon reappeared, and somewhat timidly placed himself once more opposite his companion, keeping at the same time out of reach, as if he expected some sudden attack.

"What brought you to New Zealand?" asked Hastings, abruptly.

"I came in the name of the Lord," replied Lester; "I understood that the missionaries were labouring in the vineyard with much advantage, and I came to share their pious labours."

"And their pious profits?" asked the other, with a sneer.

"Surely the labourer is worthy of his hire," returned Lester, "but I gathered but brambles where I expected figs; the missionaries were wolves in the guise of lambs: they told the people I was a devil, and the men of Belial sought my life. A chief who had the toothache declared I had bewitched him, and that he would eat me to cure it."

"Is man's flesh a cure for the toothache in New Zealand?" asked Hastings.

"No; but he would have eat me, nevertheless; but I escaped out of his hands, and stirred up another of the Philistines to smite him: the skin of his thigh, which was tattooed after a curious fashion, even now covers my worthy friend's cartouch-box."

"But how did you fall foul of the missionaries, tell me?" asked Hastings, "and talk English, will you, I don't like Bible in masquerade."

"I calculate it was two of a trade can never agree," returned the other, dropping his hypocritical phrasology, "besides which, they were too strait-laced for me."

"What, swaddlers?"

"I do not know; I cannot say they are hypocrites," answered Lester, "for I believe they mean well; but they are dead hands at morality, which did not suit my book. Still they are not up to their work; they are ignorant, self-sufficient men—'you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear,' and you cannot make a good parson out of a serious cobbler, or an elect tinker: they are ready enough to preach, but they do not make the natives understand what they preach. I once heard one of them telling some of the chiefs about heaven and hell: they said, 'their own heaven was quite good enough for them; they liked the getting leave to come down to the earth, and do mischief every now and then;' for you must know that the New Zealander's doctrine about Paradise is, that though there is plenty to eat and drink there, still there is no amusement: it is a slow place, so every now and then the spirits get leave to come down to the earth, under the name of Atua, in the shape of illnesses, hurricanes, pestilences, famine, and such like, and so take their pleasure in much the same way

as when they were alive, for they think there is no fun without mischief. Then the missionary told them, they would all go to hell where their forefathers had gone before them : they said, that was exactly what they wanted, and asked what sort of a place that was, and when they were told, (and he gave a flaming description of it, you may take your oath,) they said that it was a very proper place for white men, but they had no men in New Zealand bad enough to be sent there, and then they laughed at him, and asked him for some powder for the trouble of listening."

"I think that was a very fair demand," said Hastings, his eyes half closing.

"Yet they are anxious to learn," continued the other, "very anxious ; but the missionaries will not let them ; they will not teach them English, for by keeping them from being able to communicate with the English and Yankees, they keep them under their own thumb. Besides, they are stingy and inhospitable, which the natives detest and despise."

Hastings was now fast asleep, and his shirt being partly open at the breast, Lester espied a ribband next to his skin, and crawling cautiously towards him, drew out a locket. Scarcely had he gazed upon its contents, the portrait of a young and beautiful woman, ere the girl that was attached to Hastings, snatched it angrily out of his hand, and without even indulging the instinct of female curiosity, was restoring it to the bosom of her lord, when the latter awoke. At the first glance of his ferocious eye, Lester took to flight ; but in diving down the companion, he tripped, and his progress downwards, resembled that of a rabbit into its burrow so exactly, that Hastings' wrath, apparently also somewhat modified by the affectionate caress of his swarthy island wife, evaporated in a grim laugh, and he attempted no pursuit.

"You'll try that dodge on once too often, my joker," muttered he, between his teeth.

CHAPTER XVIII.

our hero on his road to Mr. Fitzgerald's, personally by no able of giving an account of himself, his business, his pretensions, but in that sort of state that anybody cognisant of affairs, could at once have told that he was going there of seeking an interview with Clara Hastings, &c., &c., &c., which being interpreted means a scene.

He cantered, and as he went his thoughts got into a canter too, sometimes do, Heaven knows how or why, unless it be owing to peculiar mental elasticity, or possibly, if the reader hold material influential than mind, some peculiar digestive elasticity, that everything *couleur de rose*, and causes the rouged world to roll away, and this happy temper was uninterrupted, for there were no spikes; so he arrived at Mr. Fitzgerald's somewhat nervous but still in tolerable humour. He found that gentleman standing and down before the house in a pensive and willow-wearing mood, and was thunderstruck at the unwelcome information that the departed two days before.

His first impulse, of course, was to quarrel with Mr. Fitzgerald. He did not aim so, as a lover ought, but that gentleman himself approved-begone (or as a celebrated French translator of Shakespeare it, *Si triste allez vous en*) that his love passages with Eliza arose before the gallant Captain's eyes pantomimically, one of the ordinary effects of pantomime, viz. a great inclination to sigh, and, with the rapidity and effect of Harlequin's wand, the ire that was disturbing his mind into that harmonious strain of friendliness and compassion that evolves invitations to dine. He asked him to dine at mess the next day,—a piece of hospitality the unfortunate swain gladly accepted; for ever since the death of the Ellesmere family he had had no peace at all, having laid out of his life by his sisters, those young ladies having cast upon a connection with the Marquis's family and the Countess belonging, without ever troubling their heads about the alliance being entirely out of the question. A dinner at mess consequently something of a god-send to Mr. Fitzgerald, and he declined the hospitable offer of a glass of the best raspberry, rode homewards.

It is of this country no man is bound to criminate himself, and, on no author is bound to give evidence *against* his hero, who is considered as his other and commonly better self, any more than a wife can be compelled to bear witness against one another. It is the Old Bailey heroes of the present day must be convicted in due course of law, for the recreation of the public, but the habit of chronicling the polluted course of a felon's mind from crime, from crime to the gallows, is self-imposed on their bio-

graphers, and we do not deal in dog's meat. We shall therefore confess nothing as to the somewhat savage humour in which Harry trotted home,—trotting suiting his present state of mind, which was rough and rudely shaken, much better than cantering. We will indeed admit this much, that an unfortunate donkey happening to come nearer to him than he approved of, instantly experienced the truth of the Spanish proverb, which avers that wherever an ass is foaled a stick forthwith springs up for its benefit, and that at mess that evening the asperity of his answers procured him the information that he was as savage as a bear with a sore head, which was strictly true. However we shall say no more about that, being of opinion that the old maxim, "Confess and be hanged," may be beneficially modernized by "Confess after you are hanged." Harry Mowbray is but a mortal, and moreover, a mortal in love (if Rosalind's opinion be correct, that love is merely a madness) is of course not responsible for anything he may do in that state; if indeed any man, mad or sane, can be fairly called to account for actions so natural as striking a donkey, and returning short answers to teasing questions. In the course of the next day a visit from Lord de Creci and Sir William in some degree indirectly restored the equilibrium of his temper, that is to say it compelled him to be tolerably civil, which is the next best thing to being in good humour. He had not seen them since the night of the fire, for they had been too busy to come over to Ballymacdaniel, and he had yet to receive their compliments upon the courage and skill he had displayed in rescuing the governess, of whose history, as far as it was connected with his, or indeed of whose being an acquaintance of his at all, they were ignorant.

"When did she arrive?" asked Henry.

"The morning of the fire," returned Lord William. "She had been travelling all the night, for I fancy that she was not accustomed to to travel by herself and wanted to get it over, and that was the reason she slept so sound, poor thing; she is quite young, and I believe pretty; Madelaine has taken a great fancy to her. I have not seen her yet."

"Nor have I," said Lord de Creci. "I was called away to the stables at the very moment that she made her appearance, and did not return until she had been removed. What is her name?"

"Her name,—," said Lord William. "Why, what is that?"

"The sound for orders," said Harry, as the loud tones of a bugle interrupted Lord William; "but it is an unusual time. I suppose a party wanted for some tithe row or escort duty. Really this country is just as if it were in a state of war, only one has not half so much one's own way in it."

"Well," said Lord William, "we are going to turn our backs upon it: we came to wish you good bye, for we are going away to-morrow." And with a promise from Harry, that in the event of leave being attainable, which seemed doubtful, to make his appearance in Grosvenor square the instant he reached London, the three gentlemen parted. As his two friends rode out of the barracks, Harry found himself more alone than he had hitherto fancied he could have felt himself, and now, almost for the first time, began really seriously to consider what he

should do about Clara. The sight of her had awakened all his former love, and, as if that were not enough, the circumstances of danger under which he saw her, to save her, still further heightened that love, and yet more, the state of dependence in which he found her, and from which his better feelings urged him with a restless intensity to extricate her. Still he was puzzled, the objection she had raised to joining her lot to his remained in full force, and from being puzzled, he got on to a state of utter recklessness that a child could have led him into any sort of mischief, and when Mr. Fitzgerald arrived to dinner, he was, as the phrase goes, up to anything from chuck-farthing to manslaughter. Our hero was not aware, as he descended to the mess-room, that he, in common with the rest of his regiment, was in imminent danger of being incarcerated upon no less a charge than wilful murder, on the strength of a verdict returned the evening before by a coroner's inquest. The fact was, that a few days before, a detachment of the regiment, stationed at a distant outquarter, had been called upon to aid the civil power in escorting some stock seized for arrears of tithe, and in passing through a village on their road, a rescue had been attempted with the customary formality of putting all the women in the front, whereby a mob exhibits its chivalry, and after the few troops that were there, had undergone, with their customary patience and forbearance, the usual quantity of abuse, insult, and pelting, that it is considered part of the British soldier's duty to bear, from the whole scum of the country, assembled for the express purpose of trying how much treason and felony they may commit without being hanged or shot, whenever he appears for the purpose of vindicating the law of the land, more especially when the Government is opposed to that law; the mob emboldened by impunity, and also by a report industriously circulated among them that the soldiers were all Roman Catholics (which was true) and would not do their duty (which was false),—(a most mischievous delusion, which had already spread into higher places than the mob of an Irish tithe row)—began to use fire-arms, and it became necessary to teach them that two could play at that game. The party loaded, having put off that as long as possible in order to render it more imposing, but nothing would persuade the people that they would fire, a section was ordered to fire a volley, but at that time the pseudo-humanity that shoots nurserymaids and children in the windows in order to spare rioters, thieves, and felons in the streets, was not yet exploded, and the volley was fired over the heads of the mob, which, of course, confirmed them in the impression that no effective resistance was to be anticipated from the troops, and finally not having been sufficiently instructed in the theory and practice of that peculiar species of amusement commonly called catching Tartars, his Majesty, the mob, had the temerity to make a rush at the party with a view of disarming them. This sort of thing was not to be borne, the longest lane that was ever constructed has a turning, the sharp clatter of file firing instantly reminded the assailants that their hands were on the lion's mane; the mob was in a few minutes scattered and dispersed like chaff before the wind, leaving three of their number dead, and so little were their anticipations of the forbearance of the soldiery realized that one of the

bodies upon being raised was found to have received three wounds, any one of which must have proved instantly fatal.

"How could this man have stood up to receive three wounds?" asked an officer, when he saw him; "he must have gone down with the first of them."

"So did he, sir," said a soldier, who was hammering at his flint close to him, without troubling his head about the trifling circumstance that his pan was opened and he was primed and loaded at the moment. "So he did, sir, but the men thought he was shamming, and they let a shot or two into him to make sure."

The fact is that British troops, of whatever religious denomination, may always be depended upon in such circumstances, discipline is too powerful for any other consideration besides the determination of the soldier to stand by his comrades as he is confident they will stand by him; they have no sympathy or community of feeling with a mob; and are moreover invariably exasperated to the highest degree by the insults and outrages they are compelled to endure before they are called on to act, and when they are wanted they are just in a temper to be exceedingly willing to use their arms: the great difficulty is to keep them quiet. This collision had been duly reported to the proper authorities, and unfortunate as it was, the absolute necessity for firing having been shewn, it was supposed that the matter was disposed of; but people forgot that there was a coroner's inquest to be held upon the bodies, and the jury thought fit to testify their regard for the laws and their legal acumen, as well as their acquaintance with the army list, by returning a verdict of "Wilful murder against Major-general Sir Tobias Peppercorn, colonel of the 100th regiment of foot (then on staff in India), Lieutenant-colonel Maclean, C. B., of the same regiment (then on leave in the Hebrides), and the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the aforesaid 100th regiment of foot." A verdict which gave great satisfaction at the time and place, though it will be gratifying to the advocates for the abolition of capital punishments to learn that comprehensive as it was, for it included about eight hundred men, no execution followed it, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench having taken a different view of the case, and, using some expressions by no means flattering to the jury, set it aside, where it remains.

Mr. Fitzgerald arrived, the pattern of genteel gentility; he resisted the attempt of the mess-waiters to induce him to bring his cloak and hat into the mess-room, insisted on leaving them in what he was pleased to call the hall, where they soon dropped to the floor, and were duly trampled upon by the servants; he ran a serious risk of being choked by a fish-bone by eating his herring without the assistance of a knife; he mixed water with his sherry; declined beer and cheese; called the port, portwine; and told an anecdote of the Duke of Leinster, calculated to leave an impression that there was a relationship between himself and his grace. Happening at that instant to cast a look at Harry, he observed a telegraphic communication going on between him and Hardcastle, indicating that those gentlemen treated his pretensions somewhat irreverently, which we all know is a deadly offence in such cases. Mr. Fitzgerald swelled and reddened, deliberating with himself

how he might best find vent for his indignation, which is often a very difficult matter to compass, where it is desirable to combine it with personal safety. Whilst he was turning these things in his mind, the mess-waiter entered the room, with an orderly book for Harry, wherein that gentleman read to his infinite disgust, that the day after to-morrow he was to proceed with his company a three days' march, to occupy what is called a half-billet station, which in this instance was a deserted and dilapidated shell of what had been intended for a house in a dismal swamp. This was bad enough, but it is said that it never rains but it pours; the measure of his troubles was not yet full, and an untoward event soon afterwards occurred. The conversation had turned upon the verdict of the recent coroner's jury, and Harry unfortunately joined in it.

"I recollect hearing of one quite as absurd," said he. "It was the case of a man who was found murdered in a bog; the prisoner was the last man seen with the deceased, for they were seen to enter that very bog together just before the murdered man was missed, articles belonging to his victim were found in his possession, and in other respects the circumstantial evidence was so complete as to leave not the slightest doubt but that he had murdered and afterwards robbed the poor man, however some of the jury held out, and after a time, probably not liking to be 'kished,' they agreed to split the difference, and find the man guilty of manslaughter."

This was an unhappy revival of an old story, for it so happened that Mr. Fitzgerald's father had been the very juror whose obstinacy had led to this burlesque upon trial by jury, and had been generally supposed to have shielded the criminal on account of some disclosures the latter had it in his power to make respecting him. The story was, indeed, well known in the country, though Harry, who had merely heard it as an instance of the vagaries juries will commit, knew nothing about its locality, and had no idea that in telling it he was touching an uncommonly sore place. Mr. Fitzgerald, however, like all vulgar people, concluded of course that he must occupy Harry's thoughts, and that the story was levelled directly at him; and after a good deal of ill-bred bluster, at last so completely wore out our hero's patience, as well as his sense of the duties of hospitality, as to provoke a retort on the subject of very little people's spasmodic attempts to make themselves appear very great people, illustrated by the fable of the ox and the frog—an unfortunate allusion, which sent the distiller's son away in a towering passion, declaring that the Captain should hear from him in the morning. Thus they parted; the latter by no means laying on his quondam friend the customary affectionate injunction—"Mind you write," for he had not the slightest wish to hear from him again; a misfortune which nevertheless came to pass, though not without some further adventures of Mr. Fitzgerald, for which he had not exactly bargained at starting. His meditations following their own sweet will, and by no means regarding his pleasure or judgment, took an astronomical turn, and about two hours after he had left the mess, he found himself in a worse mess yet, that seemed to be getting out of the frying pan into the fire—he had a vision.

It seemed to him that suddenly and unaccountably the roof of his house had taken wing, and that he lay in bed, gazing at the sky, and wondering what made it so cold; then he took to calculating what might be the number of the stars, thence to wandering speculations about the zoology of the moon and the man therein, thence to wondering what earthly business all those heavenly bodies could have in his bed-room; how they could have got in; whether they were made of ice, as he suspected from the temperature; and whether some of them were not thawing, for he began to have an idea that there was something wet in the neighbourhood; and finally, as his senses began to pick one another up and get into tolerable order, he discovered that he was lying on the broad of his back in a ditch, half-way between his own house and Ballymacdaniel, and immediately before his mind's eye arose the horrible idea that he had fallen down in a fit, which would seriously interfere with the insurance of his life which he meditated as the only means of securing a provision in the way of a retiring pension for Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine—Fitzgerald, that was to be. It was an unnecessary alarm, for any one else would have discovered that he was merely exceedingly drunk. Luckily for him, when he found his seat slipping or wriggling from under him, he had after the manner of indifferent horsemen, endeavoured to hold on by the head, and though unsuccessful in preventing himself falling off, had nevertheless grasped the reins so tight that the horse had not been able to get away from him, and remained with his head so close to his master, that an indifferent observer might have imagined that he was aware that flesh was grass, and thought of acting on the idea and taking a nibble. So after one or two lurches, with an oath or two to correspond, he once more clambered into the saddle, and made his way home.

The next morning, still smarting under the Captain's sarcasms, which hit the harder for their being tolerably true; a throbbing headache; a racking toothache, the result of lying in a wet ditch, that made his mouth a sort of portable hell; and a curious sensation, something like half a hundred weight, in the back of his neck, he sent off in a prodigious hurry for what is called a friend, though it is somewhat questionable whether the designation is a correct one, many a man has had reason to wish for protection from that sort of friend, for never was a truer word spoken than that, if all seconds were as averse to duels as their principals there would be but little blood shed that way.

The friend was one of those off-hand gentlemen who never see a difficulty until they are stopped by it (whereupon they turn back incontinently), and would have undertaken to do anything and everything, or rather more, in any time or no time, or rather less. "I'll bring him to book in a jiffy, I'll engage," said he,—and accordingly the instant the morning parade was dismissed in the barracks of Ballymacdaniel, a gigantic stranger, a terrible man with a terrible name, Mr. Cadwalader Fitzcrackenthorpe Macgillicuddy, late of the Croatian Grensefeld-jägern, an irregular regiment in the Austrian service, presented himself to Harry, and with a cut-throat courtesy and emphatic foreign accent, curiously engrafted on a rich native brogue, addressed him.

"I presume I have the honour of addressing Captain Mowbray." Our hero bowed and wished him at Jericho—to say no worse.

"I come on the part of my friend, Mr. Fitzgerald," said the Grensfeldjäger. "An unpleasant little affair."

Harry thought Mr. Fitzgerald as unpleasant a little affair as he had seen since one night in India he had found his bed shared by a cobra capello.

"I am instructed to demand an explanation on the subject of an insult that he was subjected to last night."

"I must beg leave to refer you to my friend, Captain Hardcastle there," returned our hero, who was already prepared for this visitation; and Mr. Macgillicuddy proceeded in the direction of the gentleman indicated.

"This comes of asking a snob to dinner," muttered Harry; "if ever I do so again,"—and he strolled slowly away, digesting as he best might the two agreeable matters he had in hand, a stupid detachment and a yet more stupid quarrel. They may say what they please about prosing story-tellers, gentlemen with one idea, literary ladies, punsters, and barrel organs, but after all there is no greater bore on earth than a man that *will* insist on one's fighting a duel with him.

CHAPTER XIX.

It is a delusion in the fairer part of the creation, the fancying that they enjoy a monopoly of beauty as many of them imagine. To eyes æsthetically trained to appreciate them, there are many, very many, beautiful things in this world. Potatoes, for instance, and buttermilk,—what favour they find in the eyes, what emotions they raise in the hearts of the excitable Irish! Upon what lovely cabbages do the dreamy Germans cast sheep's eyes! Would the Venus de Medicis divert the gaze of a Greenlander from a bottled-nosed whale, or the Apollo Belvidere the glances of a garrison belle from a heavy dragoon? How many who coldly murmur, 'She's a good-looking girl,' eagerly exclaim, "It's beautiful butter?" What a beautiful sight is grocery rewarded—in the person of an alderman! What a beautiful sight is industry protected—by the walls that environ the treadmill! There is beauty in a blazing house if it belongs to one's friend, and beauty in a roasting pig if it belongs to oneself.

Yes, to those who seek it, the Beautiful is everywhere. It hovers over the Struggling like a crimson cloud over a stormy sunset, never so welcome as when most unexpected; never so radiant as when lit up by the Sunshine of the Heart; never so impressive, so instructive, as when the Faithful marshals the way to the Blissful; and so it was that truly to the philanthropic eye, it was a beautiful sight to see Mr. Montague Marsden the morning after the conversation with Sir Thomas Horton, detailed in the 16th chapter, sally forth in his glory to pay his threatened visit to Mrs. Hastings.

It was we repeat a beautiful sight; for if there is nothing more pleasing to the gods than a good man struggling with difficulties, as a wise man said of old—which being modernized, means an uncertificated bankrupt—there ought to be something a great deal more pleasing; viz., a good man triumphant over difficulties; even as, dear as a little boy may be to his mamma when his face is dirty, he is yet more beautiful in her eyes when his struggles are over and his face washed. How refreshing are the recollections of our happy infancy. The grim Sir Thomas was gone, his stern eye and sardonic smile no longer paralyzed the risible or surrisible muscles of the happy Montague, and he stepped forth much as if Venus were leaning on his arm, and Cupid (in brass buttons, carrying Mr. Thomas Moore's works) walking demurely behind him, busy with his pea-shooter. It was, we again repeat, a beautiful sight; such as such artists as Murillo and George Cruikshank might rejoice in; and we are fortified in that assertion by the authority of the good people of Somerton, for they every one, man, woman, and child, turned out to see it: they lined the hedges, they loaded the lamp-posts, they peeped through the doors, they stared through the windows; it was eyes, eyes, eyes, nothing but eyes: before, behind, to the right and the left, above below, and round and round, every where eyes, barbarian eyes; an epidemic ophthalmia would have been a sensible relief to the unfortunate bridegroom. He entered the town between a double row of malignant eyes, and reached the market-place with a tail of eyes that the grandfather of all the peacocks might have been proud of. The market-place, wherein he at this present moment by no means desired greetings, was an open space in or near the centre of the town, of no particular size or shape, at least none that can be described, unless perhaps we might be allowed to say that it was of the size and shape of an enclosure. It contained a grey stone building whose lower story was open, consisting in fact merely of arches, some scales, weights and measures, the remains of stocks, a pump, some temporary butchers' stalls, butter and eggs, and a sack of peas. Here Mr. Marsden became the centre of an irregular polygon of concentric eyes; nor did his trials end when he left it, the boys trooped before and behind, sometimes they rushed past him and as our Gallic neighbours would say, "looked him frankly in the face;" sometimes with an engaging modesty, they would affect to be looking most attentively into the shop windows, merely to get an excuse to steal a sly glance at him as he came up, some contented themselves with a side view from the other side of the street, whilst others, keeping in the rear, took their pleasure in embodying the *vox populi, vox Dei*, in such formulæ as "Has your mother sold her mangle?" "What a shocking bad hat:" "There you go with

your eye out:" to which some added "And your nose in a sling;" others, who prided themselves upon being straightforward and speaking their minds, warningly vociferated "Ware Widder!" in short poor Mr. Montague Marsden, who had left his home with nothing but the matrimonial prospect before him of the one year of joy, one of comfort, and the rest of contentment, suddenly found that he had greatness thrust upon him uncommonly against the grain, for he could not have created a greater sensation, or excited more popular attention, if he had ridden into Somerton attired in chain armour and mounted on the back of a cameleopard with a crupper. It seemed, however, that his tormentors did not consider that their jurisdiction extended beyond the limits of the borough; for at a point where a dilapidated board shewed that tolls had been formerly collected there as long as anything came to pay toll, they left him to pursue his way alone; if he can be called alone who is accompanied by such gorgeous visions as then hovered about the head and burrowed in the brain of Mr. Montague Marsden.—Nevertheless all this glory was not unmixed; as the slave who accompanied the Roman General in his triumphal car to whisper in his ear that despite the laurel and the chariot; the captives and the spoil; the sword and the spear; the triumphing soldiers and the exulting people; he, the chief of all, the idol of the hour, was mortal and should taste death,—so Mr Montague Marsden's bachelor bashfulness whispered in his ear that he had still a somewhat awkward scene to go through, even though its results were to differ from those of its four predecessors.

"Upon my word," said he, "it is exceedingly embarrassing, I wish it was over; I shall be amazingly puzzled what to say.—Perhaps, as she is a widow, and must understand that sort of thing, she will speak first; ah, very likely; that will be very pleasant—I wonder will she blush—I am certain I shall."

However, it was no use thinking; (there is a deeper philosophy in that remark than meets the eye) there was the house staring him in the face, he knew the door could not be far off, the time for action was arrived, he nerved himself, that is to say, he wiped his face with his pocket-handkerchief (notwithstanding that it was January) blew his nose, cleared his throat, drew on his gloves, passed the dreaded door about twenty yards, then returned,—go he must, and go he did,—and he pulled at the bell as if it were the string of a shower-bath. The four times he had been there before on the same errand, rose, each in chilly distinctness, before his eyes; he looked at the girl that opened the door as a being rather superior to ordinary maids of all work, and was ushered into Mrs. Hastings' presence with the sensation best described by the "feeling as if he couldn't help it." The first thing that struck him was her remarkable self-possession. He had, as the reader is aware, appeared already before her in the character of an unsuccessful suitor;—twice he had come to the point unexpectedly, but the other two occasions Mrs. Hastings had been aware of the object of his visit, and had exhibited considerable agitation—there was now nothing of the sort; all was calmness—grace. She received him as if she had already mentally entered upon her Mrs. Marsdenship, and did not care three farthings about him, and without further ceremony than a shake of the hand, which he returned with suitable emphasis, proceeded at once to business.

"I am delighted to have an opportunity of expressing my gratitude to you, Mr. Marsden, for the offer you were so good as to make me through Sir Thomas Horton," said she, with an amiability of manner that made the very crown of Mr. Marsden's head blush over all its bare expanse like a new-blown rose; up went the modest blood, overrunning territory after territory on his phrenological globe with true colonizing recklessness; it swamped the intellectual organs instantly, and spread itself over the affective ones, cautiousness, self-esteem, firmness, benevolence, were all illuminated by the ruddy flood; it passed over adhesiveness to philo-progenitiveness, and still farther, and still Mrs. Hastings continued:—"In my present lonely situation, it is really an advantage that cannot be too highly appreciated."

"It gives me the greatest pleasure to hear you say so, Mrs. Hastings," said Mr. Marsden, inexpressibly relieved in his mind at finding that there was to be no sentimental love-making; an exercise which, elegant in itself, is always somewhat hampered, or if one may use such an expression, string-halted by the secret consciousness of a bald head, all was to be straight-forward, direct, and business-like; after his own heart.

"It was so considerate of you too," said the lady, "for really this cottage, solitary as I am, was too much for me."

The pride of successful diplomacy certainly stirred in Mr. Marsden's heart at this moment, almost as much as if he had succeeded in opening a new market (shambles) in Central Asia. "It's the solitude, poor thing," thought he, "that comes of getting her parted from Clara."

"But," continued the lady, "if, after such a proof of your friendship, it is allowable to ask you such a question, pray why did you not announce your good intentions towards me in person? what could have induced you to employ such a messenger as Sir Thomas Horton? why did you not come yourself?"

Mr. Marsden simpered and fidgetted, a certain warning instinct whispered in a voice of significant import, that it would never do to tell her that he had been afraid of coming himself. He felt that the question of ultimate supremacy was yet to be debated. "Why, really, Mrs. Hastings," said he, "I don't know—after all that has passed—I had a delicacy." (N.B.—This was not intended as an allusion to the roast turkey).

"That I can perfectly appreciate, Mr. Marsden," interrupted the widow, with an air of the most enchanting deference: "I can see and appreciate the delicacy of mind that deterred you, after having so overwhelmed us with your past kindness, from exhibiting yourself so prominently in the character, I may almost say, of the protector of a lone woman."

"The very word!" mumbled Mr. Montague Marsden to himself, with a spasmodic action of the muscles of the throat, something between a gulp and a hiccup, "the very word Horton used—what a sharp fellow he must be:" and with his delight at recognizing the very phrase in which Sir Thomas had promised him success, mingled a sort of flutter of doubt whether the time had not arrived when he might with propriety say something about a kiss, or some little indulgence or instalment of that sort. "However," thought he, "I must say something civil, I suppose she will not confess that she's in love with me till I have at

least told her that I'm rather fond of her—that's only reasonable—upon my word I am exceedingly fond of her."

The lady, however, appeared inclined to take all the trouble off Mr. Marsden's hands. "Pray when do you propose ('Ahem, I thought I proposed," thought Mr. Marsden) I should avail myself of your kindness?" asked she, in the most winning manner in the world.

"It rests with you to name the day, my dear Mrs. Hastings," replied he in the most won manner in the world. "That is coming to the point," thought he, his mind much eased by finding that he was not called upon formally to repeat his tale of love: "Upon my word its very pleasant work courting a widow, she saves one all the trouble, like a self-acting coffee pot. — Considering all the circumstances," continued he, "various systems of circles overspreading his countenance, with a network of simpers, "considering all the circumstances, and the time we have known one another, I should think it would not be expected—I mean that there need be no unnecessary delay."

"There need be no delay at all," said the lady, with as much decision of tone and manner as her habitual gentleness admitted of.

"Charming frankness," thought Mr. Marsden, "sweet compliance: how few women could have said so much in so few words." However, the moment of decision is sometimes puzzling, even to those whose minds are made up, and he, as if to familiarize his mind to the sound and the sense, repeated "There need be no delay at all."

"I am perfectly ready at any time," said Mrs. Hastings, "you know since Clara is gone it has made a great change to me."

"And so prepared you for a greater," said Mr Marsden, in a sort of extatic state, that seemed to be composed of *couleur de rose*, opium, nitrous acid gas, and bank notes.

"It is but a step," observed the lady, smiling.

"A most important step," said the gentleman, chuckling and rubbing his hands, and warming with his subject; "yes, the glorious future is before us, we must think no more of the past." This was philosophy, and consequently unintelligible to Mrs. Hastings.

"Why, my dear Mr. Marsden," said she, "you surprise me! How long have you taken this fancy for moralizing?"

"True love is morality," returned her dear Mr. Marsden, without any very perfect idea of what he was saying.

"I hope so," said Mrs. Hastings, beginning to be somewhat puzzled.

"I trust so," said Mr. Marsden, fervently, "I feel it, I know it; but the day, the day."

"Any day that suits you will equally suit me," said Mrs. Hastings, with an angelic resignation.

"Directly, by licence," said the impetuous lover.

"Licence!" said Mrs. Hastings, apparently still more puzzled, "licence! why it's only public-houses require licences."

"Witty creature! the occasion makes her playful.—Shall we say this day three weeks?" said Mr. Marsden, with due consideration for the publication of banns, which now seemed necessary.

"With all my heart," was the answer, that went straight to Mr. Marsden's heart, and sent the blood out of it as if several millions of

"Nitrous acid is a deadly poison; he must mean 'Nitrous oxide' or 'laughing gas,' or 'exhilarating gas' as the dealers call it."

needles and pins were whirled through his veins with each throb of his pulse.

"Charming creature!" said he, and he rose from his seat, concluding that the propitious moment had arrived when he might claim the privilege of a chaste salute. Mrs Hastings, who supposed that he had risen to depart, rose also and came forward to meet him, thereby giving him additional courage. "One kiss, my adored," said he, completing the circular character of his face by bringing his lips into a circle, and extending his arms in a circle, till he looked more like a crab upon castors than anything else, "the first, the ——"

"Good heavens! what can you mean, Mr. Marsden," said Mrs. Hastings, retreating in the utmost trepidation, but with a certain self-taught engineering skill, upsetting a chair at his feet to serve as a sort of temporary abbatis, "are you mad?"

"Yes! my beloved, wild with love and joy," was the alarming answer, "mad, beside myself, out of my senses;" whereupon the lady took refuge behind a table, and having succeeded in interposing it between herself and her admirer, who by his gestures sought to express the vivacity of his feelings, looked on in no little anxiety to see what he would do next; quite certain that he could not jump the table; but not by any means desirous of commencing a series of rings like a hunted hare. "Maiden coyness," murmured the lover, continuing to advance, "widow coyness, I mean; why, surely, Mrs. Hastings, we who are engaged to be married——"

"Engaged to be married," shrieked Mrs. Hastings, in a tone and manner that checked Mr. Marsden on the spot, and made him feel as if a very black coal hole had just opened under his feet with a probable bottom, but no very certain one within any tolerably reasonable distance, "engaged to be married? how, on earth, can you talk such nonsense," and at the same moment a sort of wild look that appeared upon the poor man's face, suggested to her that he was really labouring under a delusion on the subject that amounted to a monomania, if such is a proper term, as applied to a couple.

"Engaged to be married!" repeated Mr. Marsden, "to be sure; why, what have we been talking about this last half hour, are we not engaged to be married?"

The gentleman's perplexity shewing her that she was still some way to windward of him, restored the lady to her self-possession, "Certainly not," said she.

"Why, you accepted the offer I made you through Sir Thomas Horton," urged Mr. Marsden.

"Undoubtedly," returned the lady, "of course I did, and was extremely obliged to you for the consideration and kindness it shewed, though I was certainly somewhat surprised by your choice of an ambassador; but what has that to say to engagements?"

"Why, did not you tell Sir Thomas, that you would marry me?" asked Mr. Marsden, beginning to feel extremely uneasy, when he reflected upon the reckless and eccentric character to whom he had entrusted this delicate negotiation.

"I told him nothing of the sort," answered Mrs. Hastings: "Sir



Journal of Management Education 30(6)

1

Thomas came here yesterday, much to my surprise, and I may say, indeed, to my distress, for I have seen him before under circumstances that leave me no wish to see him again; he said that nothing would have induced him to trespass upon me, but that he came with a proposal from you—”

“So he did,” interrupted Mr. Marsden, “and you accepted it!”

“A proposal from you,” continued the lady, without seeming to hear, or at all events to heed his interruption, “which you said you felt a certain delicacy about making yourself, to take this house off my hands, as you observed that it was larger than I wanted, now that Clara was gone, and the garden besides was a source of unnecessary expense; and to let me that little cottage at the corner of the Falconscrag road, which would be large enough for me and not half so expensive.”

“The mischievous madman,” ejaculated Mr. Marsden, “the Lord forgive me for saying so, this is out of revenge, because I would not tell him who his father is,—did he say nothing about—” here he hesitated and simpered, but no longer so vain-gloriously as before, “about—marriage?”

“Not a word,” returned the lady who, seeing the mistake Mr. Marsden had fallen into, now came forth from behind the table, relieved of the fear of a *tête à tête* with a lunatic, “nor should I have listened to him if he had; really, Mr. Marsden,” continued she, observing his manifold distress, and being somewhat moved by it as well as by his constancy, “it is time you should give up a pursuit that only leads to uneasiness on both your part and mine. Grateful as I feel to you for the constant and unceasing kindness you have heaped on one who, God knows, has stood much in need of it, I can entertain no stronger feelings. The recollection of one, who—” here her voice faltered an instant, “who is at rest long years ago, remains too deeply—in short,” said she, abruptly, “I must beg that, once for all, you will receive the assurance that I never can and never will be yours.”

Thus terminated the day that had commenced so triumphantly, Mr. Montague Marsden returned home desponding, his very heart so chilled that a third pint of mulled port was requisite to restore it to its proper temperature, where it remained, and never boiled over again,—and from that time to this he has made no more proposals of marriage to Mrs. Hastings.

CHAPTER XX.

MR. CADWALLADER Fitzcrackenthorpe Macgillicuddy pulled up his shirt collar, switched his boots, and approaching the group of officers indicated by Harry, inquired of the nearest of them, "Might I be allowed to ask which is Captain Hardcastle?"

The officer pointed out the desired individual, who stood within two yards of his elbow.

"I believe I have the pleasure of speaking to Captain Hardcastle?" said Mr. Macgillicuddy, slightly raising his hat.

No belief on earth was ever more strictly founded on the fact, and the personage addressed, assented to it accordingly.

"Might I be allowed to speak a word with you, in private, Captain?" continued the ambassador, and the parties accordingly adjourned into the middle of the barrack-square.

"I'm come, as I suppose you are already aware, Captain," commenced Mr. Macgillicuddy, "to demand explanation or satisfaction from your friend Captain Mowbray on behalf of my friend Mr. Fitzgerald, for the insult he offered him last night."

"Might I ask what the insult is, that you allude to?" asked Hardcastle.

"The language he made use of, to be sure," said Mr. Macgillicuddy, with some appearance of surprise, "what else would it be?"

"Perhaps you would have the kindness to specify the language that Mr. Fitzgerald considers offensive," replied the other, with undisturbed calmness.

"Faith, I don't know," returned the other, "all that I know is that Fitz dined at the mess yesterday, and he and the Captain had some words."

"I certainly recollect Mr. Fitzgerald leaving the mess yesterday evening, in a furious passion," returned the imperturbable Englishman, "but nobody knew what it was about, and I certainly have no recollection of anything passing between them to make such a proceeding as sending a challenge, necessary; you must really put the matter in a more tangible form. Let us hear what Mr. Fitzgerald takes exception at—in what he feels himself aggrieved?"

"He's not grieved a bit, he's d——d angry, and he wants satisfaction," answered Mr. Macgillicuddy, who was beginning to find that with whatever good will he had entered upon his embassy, his instructions were not sufficiently explicit, to enable him to bring it to a satisfactory close, "he's as mad as a hatter, he wants explanation, Sir, or satisfaction!"

"But, what for?" asked the impracticable Hardcastle.

"How the devil should I know?" returned Mr. Macgillicuddy, losing all patience at the obtuseness of the Captain, who would not



entertain a quarrel without grounds, "sure, you know well enough yourself; you were there all the time,—I wasn't by, and Fitz was so drunk, that he recollects nothing about it, barrin that he had a knot in his pocket handkerchief, to remind him that he had quarrelled with the Captain; so that anyhow he knows he's been insulted."

"Upon my word," said Hardcastle, "I admire Mr. Fitzgerald's spirit."

"By dad, you'd better not say that to his father's son," interrupted the other, "you might as well call him Ould Mashtub at once, or Daddy Grains, as the boys used."

"Well, at all events," continued Hardcastle, who knew nothing about Mr. Fitzgerald's parentage, excepting a vague idea, that he was nearly related to the Duke of Leinster, and consequently neither understood nor cared for Mr Macgillicuddy's caution, but was desirous of keeping the peace. "At all events a duel is too serious a matter to be entered into, upon such vague grounds as a quarrel which, if it ever took place at all, took place as you admit, when your friend was so far gone, that he did not know what was said to him—"

"Come, now, Captain," said Mr. Macgillicuddy, coaxingly, "tell us what it was all about, like a good fellow,—sure it would be more satisfactory to our feelings to know what the rights of it is, before they fight; maybe it mightn't be so bad as Fitz thinks it is, and we might settle the matter without burning powder at all, with a bit of an apology or explanation, anyhow it would be much easier to explain if we knew something about it; sure you wouldn't like to see in all the country papers, that you and I were seconds in a duel, without knowing what the principals had quarrelled about."

"I should really hope that there was no prospect of our being seconds in a duel at all, Mr. Macgillicuddy," returned the matter-of-fact Englishman, "for I have not been able to discover yet that there is a quarrel at all. Neither the army nor the country expect men to fight duels until they know what they have quarrelled about; on the contrary, we expect that our officers will not enter into unnecessary quarrels."

"You're mighty contrairry, Captain," said Macgillicuddy. "Sure it's a point of honour this—it isn't a point of law."

"Show us how your principal's honour has been affected," was the inexorable answer. "If Captain Mowbray has been in the wrong, there is no man readier to confess himself so; but we must hear what the cause of this message is, and I must beg that all further communications on the subject may be in writing."

Mr. Macgillicuddy looked for a moment at the speaker with a peculiarly knowing look, his countenance then assumed a character of regret, and then he shook his head in token of resignation. He was evidently not particularly pleased with the turn that affairs had taken, but there was no help for it, and promising a speedy communication, he rode off, muttering as he went out—"I see how it is, there'll be no fun; the devil fly away with the man that first invented writing afore fighting—as sure as they take to quill-driving it spoils sport."

"Well, Hardcastle, how did you and your fire-eating friend get

on?" said the Major, observing that a suppressed smile upon that officer's countenance seemed to indicate that he did not anticipate any very serious consequences from the quarrel. "What did he want?"

"He didn't know," returned the Captain; "so I sent him back to learn his lesson."

"Did you pin him to correspondence?" asked the Major.

The Captain gave a nod and a wink, as much as to say, "Trust me for that."

"You're up to that dodge?"

"Can a duck swim?" was the answer.

"Right," said the veteran. "Nothing floors a blustering, bullying second, or a principal that wants to get a reputation for courage cheap, like making them put everything in black and white; they can fall back upon no misunderstanding, no fallacy, no blarney; no man can take liberties with a case that is to go ultimately before the public—all must be straightforward and shipshape. The same publicity that enables the gentleman to justify his conduct, stops the ruffian effectively. The man who first hit upon the plan of publishing all correspondence relative to duels, did more to discourage duelling than all the laws that ever were made, or all the sermons that ever were preached."

"Meantime," observed Hardcastle, pathetically, "I shall have to remain in barracks all day long until that jackass gets sober enough to remember what was said to him."

"It is a pity you are not on orderly duty," said the Major, sympathisingly, "you might have killed two birds with one stone, you know; however, never mind, he won't fight."

"I think not," rejoined the Captain, lighting a cigar.

"Well, Fitz," said Mr. Macgillicuddy, upon his return to his now somewhat repentant principal, "here's a proper fool's errand you've sent me upon. The officers say they know nothing of any insult you received last night from Captain Mowbray."

"Do they in airnest?" said Mr. Fitzgerald, exceedingly relieved in his mind by the announcement, for his valour of the night before—though it had been prolonged some way into the morning by the irritating effects of headache, bilious ill-humour, and the sense of having made a fool of himself, if not worse,—was by no means a fire that, like a patent stove, consumes its own smoke, feeding on it all the time; on the contrary, fire and smoke had departed together on the wings of the wind, and nothing remained but dust and ashes, the tokens of repentance and sorrow; wherefore this announcement made him feel as if twelve or fourteen stone weight of anxiety had at once been lifted off his breast—for, notwithstanding that he himself *now* had succeeded in recalling to his memory certain somewhat disparaging remarks, which it cannot be denied had been addressed to him by Harry in the state of irritation he was in the night before, still he also recollected that there was an astonishing confusion going on at the moment, and that it was perfectly possible that nobody else should have heard them; and it likewise struck him, that if nobody else

would say that Harry had insulted him, there was no earthly reason in saying so himself. There is a time for every purpose—a time to keep silence and a time to speak, and the former seemed to be in season just then.

"Well, Maggie, that's mighty odd," said he, rubbing his forehead as if to assist his memory. "I couldn't have dreamed it when I was lying in the ditch."

"It's hard to say what a man may dhrame, and he lying in a ditch," returned Mr. Macgillicuddy. "I remember dhramin once that I was as rich as Solomon, and almost as wise. How long were you there do you think?"

"Faith, I might have been a couple of hours, with a splittin' headache, and the stars winking at me like mad," answered Mr. Fitzgerald: "I was thinking of building a church all the time."

"And that turned to shooting a captain," observed Mr. Macgillicuddy. "Well, I've heard of dhramas going by contraries, and I suppose that's one of them; anyhow, you must tell me what it was the Captain said to you."

"You can't call a man out for what you dreamt he said of you?" asked Mr. Fitzgerald, doubtfully, as if his exuberant valour urged him irresistibly into the field on any terms, or on no terms whatever.

"I don't think you can," returned Mr. Macgillicuddy; "not unless you could get him to make himself answerable for your dhramas; and if you could do that much, I'm thinkin' that it would be better not to quarrel with him at all, but get him to make himself answerable for your debts instead; just get him to back a bill for you, or that sort of thing."

"Sure, my honour's vindicated by sending the message," continued Mr. Fitzgerald; "that's all a gentleman can expect of me."

"It's a dale more than he expected, any how," responded the other.

"It's a mighty pretty quarrel as it stands," said Mr. Fitzgerald, ignorant of the misapplication of the quotation, or perhaps, indeed, unconscious that he was quoting at all,—"It's well to leave well alone."

"That's thrue," said Mr. Macgillicuddy, musingly, "but I cannot go back and tell the Captain that you dreamed he insulted you, when you were lying on your back, dead dhruken in a ditch?"

"Say you're satisfied with the explanation," said Mr. Fitzgerald, boldly; for now another weight was removed from his mind, by his having ascertained that his formidable second would not compel him to fight, right or wrong, as he had at one time apprehended he would.

"Whew!" whistled Mr. Macgillicuddy, "that would never do; you'd put your foot in it there, them officers are queer chaps to dale with, they'll be as quiet as lambs, till you'd think that they'd give apologies by the dozen, till you come to a point, where they think its time to stop, and then they turn on you like devils. If you said that, maybe he'd up with his back, and say he'd given no explanation at all; it's ill playing with edge-tools."

"Well, say whatever you please," said Mr. Fitzgerald, who, like a great man, was satisfied with the main point, namely, not fighting, being gained, and content to let the smaller ones follow at their leisure.

rank did not present itself to her mind, nor did Clara's open and ingenuous disposition admit of the painful consciousness of inferiority, that often accompanies unequal friendship. Indeed it was Lady Ellesmere's system in selecting a governess to choose only one who was in every respect a fit person to be a friend of her daughters, and then to treat and consider her as such.

With respect to Harry, he had hung up his sword in the mean time, without any very immediate idea of taking it down again. Having got tired of the army, he began to consider whether the temptations of that profession, either at the present time or at any future period, were sufficient to counterbalance its discomforts. Upon consulting Major Marsden on the subject, he received from that experienced officer, the following Memorandum.

You will probably become a Lieutenant-Colonel at the age of fifty, your position will then be as follows :—

Emolument.

Pay 17s a day, and allowance 3s—£1. a day per Ann. £365.

Deductions.

Interest of money, commonly about £5000.—£250.

Difference between the sum allowed for a horse and real cost, and also a deduction of 3s a day, command money when you are on leave, say together about £40. a year, £40. £290.

Net emoluments of British Lieut.-Colonel after service, of from thirty to fifty years £75. per Ann.—

About twenty or five and twenty years after this, you may be appointed a Major-general, in which case the usual routine is, that you should half ruin yourself by accepting a government or situation on the staff, whose outgoings very considerably exceed its incomings; in order to acquire a claim to the Colonelcy of a regiment, with which the few remaining years of your life between the colonies and the grave, are patched up; by this time you are pretty well used up, and soon afterwards are decently interred, having seen every tradesman you ever employed become a rich man in time to enjoy his competence, earned certainly, but not fought and wrestled for, by land and sea, with sword, fire, storm, land crabs, rotten transports, enforced idleness, night exposure, tropical climates, exile, and every illness that the sun shines on."

This sketch of the prospects of a British officer, seemed to Harry to be rather a favourable one, it was certainly more favourable than Major Marsden's own personal experience warranted, for he was past fifty and was still a Major, so our hero not liking to give up his profession irrevocably at one plunge, resolved upon trying how he liked being his own master, and retired upon half pay. He proceeded in the first instance to Falconsrag, with a view of turning country gentleman for a time, setting his house and lands in order, and then setting out on a tour in Europe,—and for a fortnight enacted Cincinnatus with great success, that is to say he wore thick hobnailed shoes and gaiters, drank an amazing quantity of strong beer, pinched the back of every

B. A. P. HARRY MOWBRAY.

HARRY MOWBRAY.

149

beast he could get within reach of, and perambulated his estate with a very singular and ~~surgical~~ looking instrument in his hand, which some people affirmed was intended for marking, pruning, or otherwise molesting trees. There is no saying what mischief this weapon might have done, but for the circumstance that there were no trees for it to operate upon; but in the course of May, an invitation from Lord de Creci, to join him in his cruise in the Mediterranean on board the Arab, altered all the plans he had formed, and he gladly embraced the offer. The yacht was still fitting out at Gosport, and was to sail early in August. Lord de Creci was there hurrying on the preparations, but the end of July found Harry at Ellesmere, where also was Mr. Montague Marsden, who had led somewhat an unsettled life of late (in reality since his failure in settling himself,) for the ridicule attendant upon his last unsuccessful attempt on Mrs. Hastings' hand, had fairly driven him out of Somerton. He had spent the summer in an unhappy wandering, from chophouse to chophouse, in London, and was now at Ellesmere, where also was expected Sir Thomas Horton, and Lord Chorley. The arrival of the former of these gentlemen was looked forward to with evident anxiety by the inmates of the castle; indeed wherever he went he seemed to create some sort of sensation, commonly a disagreeable one; and the night before his arrival, he was the subject of a long and anxious conversation between Mr. Marsden and Lord Ellesmere, upon the occasion of that gentleman giving the Marquis an account of the loss of the Mary Anne, and the finding of Sir Thomas, which Mr. Marsden seemed to consider by no means a case of treasure-trove. Indeed it required no superhuman acuteness to discover that, although the presence of his Lordship, who was evidently determined to befriend Sir Thomas under all circumstances, prevented the express declaration of his opinion, still, in Mr. Marsden's inmost heart there was a sort of glimmering idea, that as the ship *was* wrecked and so many people *were* drowned, there might just as well have been one more; it would have saved him some trouble, some more perplexity, and the scene with Mrs. Hastings; and Sir Thomas would have slept peaceably, which probably would have been an agreeable novelty to him, for he invariably complained of not being able to sleep. Such were Mr. Marsden's secret opinions, for as far as the heart is concerned there is little difference between the hard-heartedness of uncontrolled passions, and the callousness of selfish indolence; they are chips of the same block, and an uncommonly hard block it is:—however, he said nothing about this to Lord Ellesmere, contenting himself with remarking how fortunate Sir Thomas was in being saved at all.

"Yea," said the Marquis, "that is very true, but that shipwreck was most unfortunate. If he had once got out to the East, there is no saying how long he might have remained there: from what I know of his character, I should say, that if he would have plunged at once into investigations there, that would have kept his hands full for the rest of his life. In those countries, the past, the present, and the future are alike absorbing, alike dreamy, colossal and obscure."

Φ. Τ. Δ.

"That is precisely his feeling," said Mr. Marsden, "I recollect his using the phrase, 'Take India from whatever point of view you please, she always looms large in the haze.'"

"Well," said Lord Ellesmere, "knowing that he had that feeling, we might have depended upon its keeping him in India some years at a time, when, for several reasons, it is of the greatest consequence that he should be kept out of this country.—Indeed" (here his Lordship smiled slightly) "it is probable that the search he proposes undertaking on the banks of the Irawaddy may detain him some considerable time."

"He grows more unmanageable and headstrong every day," said Mr. Marsden, with something of a grin, nevertheless, "upon my conscience I do not know what is to be done with him: and, what is worse, I am told he has quarrelled with the Admiralty, because they would not give him a ship, and that they have threatened never to employ him again."

"Hem," said the Marquis, "I dare say this Admiralty will not: but I do not think those gentlemen likely to remain any very enormous time in office; neither man nor beast can long hunt with the hounds and run with the hare as they seem to me to propose doing."

"I thought he would have killed me when he was at Waterproof Lodge for refusing to tell him who his father was."

"His father, poor fellow," said Lord Ellesmere, with a sigh, "sleeps sound enough now; it is the mother that really gives me uneasiness: any explosion or discovery during her life-time is what I dread; and every time that he makes himself conspicuous there is danger of some of those that know half the story getting a clue to the other half."

"Very true, my Lord," returned Mr. Marsden, "the rank of the parties complicate these affairs amazingly; if she had been a milk-maid there need have been little trouble about it."

"None whatever," answered the peer. "Did she see him when he was in London?"

"She did, and was taken ill, and obliged to be carried out of the room; but nobody knew the cause."

"Do you know what he did with himself during those few months?"

"He has got a most singular hobby now, my Lord, he spent his time visiting all the mad-houses he could get access to; he has a singular idea that all madness arises from the constant recurrence of one idea, and that, consequently, the constant study of an encyclopædia would cure most cases by suggesting a succession of fresh ideas: this he calls 'the rotation system; or, cyclopean order of successive ideas:' and he says that the world never saw a madman who had read the *Encyclopædia Britannica* from end to end, which I think is very likely."

"I suppose not, or a sane man neither; but as to that fancy for examining mad-houses, that is the very last thing in the world I should have thought of his doing," said Lord Ellesmere, with uncontrolled astonishment. "You know, I suppose, that I expect him here to-morrow?"

"I do," answered Mr. Marsden, shrugging up his shoulders, as much as to say 'it is not for my pleasure he is coming here,' and Lord Ellesmere, not being aware of the trick that, in the exuberance of his some-

what erratic fancy, Sir Thomas had played Mr. Marsden on the subject of his projected matrimonial alliance with Mrs. Hastings, dismissed the wayward sailor from his mind for the present.

"By-the-bye," said he, "I take it for granted Lady Ellesmere has thanked you for the treasure you found for us in Miss Hastings; my young people are charmed with her, and, indeed, so is their mother."

Mr. Marsden made a sort of inarticulate, unintelligible acknowledgment of this, and sidged a little in his chair, for the mention of Clara recalled to his mind the unsuccessful issue of the plot by which he expected to gain the mother, by separating her from the daughter; and it also suggested to him, and that most painfully, that the circumstances attending his last rejection left him entirely at the mercy of Sir Thomas Horton, during that gentleman's stay at Ellesmere, inasmuch as he could at any moment, by telling the story overwhelm him with ridicule; and he also knew that the gallant knight was just as likely to do so as not, and that, if he did, he would probably choose the place and the audience that suited him best, and certainly garnish the tale with such additions as he might think ornamental. How to treat him on his arrival puzzled him exceedingly. He by no means liked the idea of a quarrel with him, and indeed had he been so inclined, that would now be out of the question, so much time had elapsed since the original offence; he would have been very glad to have sunk the whole matter, and said nothing about it, could he have been certain that the other party would have also observed a strict neutrality, but for that he had no security whatever. He thought of a plan much in use, and often very effective: viz. stoutly and gallantly denying the truth of the whole story; but that was too strong a measure for Mr. Marsden, if indeed it did not infringe upon the privileges of Parliament, and finally, seeing nothing else to be done, he resolved upon taking the initiative; a resolution which nothing but the most intense perception of its necessity could have forced upon him, upon receiving Sir Thomas, upon his arrival, with the utmost cordiality, and treating the whole matter as one of the very best practical jokes that ever was played. This prudent resolution he put in practice the next day with remarkable success; a success which was indeed, to him, an unexpected God-send; for, very much to his astonishment, Sir Thomas seemed to have forgotten the whole story: he neither by look, word, or gesture, ever once alluded to it; and so completely did he seem unconscious of such a hoax ever having been played, that Mr. Marsden occasionally even doubted whether the whole affair was not the creation of his own imagination, so that he might almost have said with the immortal, or, perhaps more properly, everlasting, author of that singularly authentic work entitled *Ireland and the Irish*:—

ALL THESE things APPEAR like a *hideous dream*. They would be utterly INCREDIBLE ONLY THAT they are QUITE CERTAIN.*

All this Mr. Marsden might have said, but being as he formerly very justly remarked, no orator, he contented himself with grovelling in the realm of common sense, his idea of antithesis being goose and apple sauce, venison and currant jelly, veal and ham sandwiches; and, as the cook was good, and the wine better, he became himself an optimist, and made the best he could of everything.

* The writer of this book is a
Confounded fool!!!

With our hero, however, it was otherwise ; he was somewhat hotter in the head, and somewhat warmer in the heart than the sedate Montague, and was by no means content with having been six days in the same house with Clara without seeing her. He had made such efforts to accomplish that object as he could, but hitherto without success. In so large a house as Ellesmere, those whose apartments were distant never met by accident, numerous staircases and passages led, without interfering with one another, from one part of the house to another ; and as, in point of fact, Harry never passed along any but those which conducted him from his own room to the hall, and Miss Hastings never came near that part of the house at all, they might have been in the same house for a twelvemonth without ever meeting,—for it is to be remembered that going to church by no means formed an integral part of Harry's Sunday, so that that opportunity was thrown away upon him. He had a sort of an idea that if he had any luck he might meet her out walking with her charge, and made a good number of casts in different directions among the shrubberies with this view, but in vain ; he tried the garden also, but drew blank ; he did not know at what hour of the day she went out, or whether it was on foot or in a carriage. Once or twice he thought of writing to her, but his good feeling revolted at this, though he would have been puzzled to tell why ; sometimes he thought of taking Lady Madelaine into his confidence on the subject, as it certainly appeared that Clara had done already ; but this course also seemed to him to be liable to some objections, for he thought, not unnaturally, that failure was bad enough in itself without the additional aggravation of more witnesses than could be helped ; and in the meantime time was slipping away, as Brother Jonathan would figuratively express it, like greased lightning,—the last day of July had dived into the last night, and the two had gone off together to keep company with the years beyond the flood—he was to embark early in August on board the “Arab,” whose equipment and preparations for her voyage were proceeding as rapidly as a very impatient Earl, with an immensity of money and no objection to spending it, could keep them moving, and still he had not seen Clara ; he saw no reasonable chance of seeing her, but still could not reconcile himself to the idea of leaving the country without making one more effort to overcome the objection that he knew was the *only* bar to his union with her.

With respect to Clara herself, it may appear strange that neither the friendship that existed from early youth before the appearance of a tenderer feeling, nor her gratitude for the service he had rendered her at the burning of Avonmore, nor even the circumstance of his having so recently seen her mother, should have induced her to depart from the resolution she had expressed before his arrival to Lady Madelaine, not to see him at all. The fact was, she dared not.

“I know,” she said to Lady Madelaine, “that in refusing him I acted rightly, though the so acting was very bitter, but now the bitterness, at least the first bitterness is partly passed, firmness is what is required of me, and heaven knows it is a hard task, with that dreadful night at Avonmore before my eyes, to be firm ; but it would be weakness, culpable weakness in me to risk an interview that would certainly

x while —

bring back a host of painful feelings, and might shake the resolution that I feel it a sacred duty to adhere to. I think I know the effect that the sight of me would have upon him. I do not know what effect his appearance might have upon me. I therefore will not see him."

"Still," urged Lady Madelaine, who did not altogether despond, notwithstanding the firmness with which this was pronounced, for she knew she had a formidable ally in Clara's own breast, "I admire the steadfastness with which you adhere to the view you have taken, painful though it be, but I confess I take a different view myself; even according to your own account, the worst that can be said of Mr. Mowbray is that his ideas upon religious subjects are unsettled."

"Indeed it is the worst," said Clara.

"You do not apprehend that he has adopted any distinctly false system to which he would be likely to wish to make converts?"

"No," said the other, quite the contrary, "what distresses me most about him is his indifference; when I have tried to speak to him upon religious matters, he used to listen very patiently, never arguing, but at last he would ask me some question that I could not answer, and then laugh at my being so puzzled."

"Still," urged Lady Madelaine, "he does not profess an erroneous creed; he is not an Arian or a Socinian, a deist or an atheist?"

"He says he is a theist," said Clara, doubtfully.

"Well, Noah or Abraham might have said the same; I am not defending his principles, but still, their being unsettled is not a reason for supposing they are never to be settled,—and what is more likely to bring that happy end about than the tender solicitude of a wife? What nobler task could you propose for yourself than to rescue such a soul from destruction? With such a glorious object could you not feel that you had not lived in vain?"

"I am not insensible to all these considerations," said Clara, "nor, I confess, am I indifferent about Mr. Mowbray; but still I dread it. We are told, 'Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers.'"

"We are told that the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife," was the answer.

"But I am not Mr. Mowbray's wife; and besides, though we are talking about seeing him, we have no reason to suppose that he will wish to see me, or that if he did, it would be for any particular object."

A slight smile shewed that Lady Madelaine did not attach much weight to this humility, and Clara observing it, continued in some little confusion, "at least I have no right to assume it. I know, besides, that the leading point in his character is pride, and I am convinced that it will prevent his ever thinking of me—as he did before."

"There is a species of pride that is no unimportant part of the foundation upon which constancy rests;" said Lady Madelaine, "besides which—" here she hesitated for a moment, for she felt she was approaching somewhat delicate ground—"I think that now Mr. Mowbray has some claims upon your gratitude; you surely have not forgotten that dreadful night at Avonmore."

"No, indeed, I have not," said Clara, "with a shudder, nor shall I as long as I live. I never can forget the terrible moment when I

opened the door of my room and saw nothing but smoke ; I could not see the opposite wall of the passage, it was so thick ; and there I stood blinded and bewildered, not knowing whether to go on or stop, or which way to turn. It was too horrible. I do not now know how I managed to escape,—I mean to reach the window."

"And you forget how you came down from the window too," said Lady Madelaine, almost reproachfully.

"I remember," said Clara, perhaps a little nettled at this direct charge of ingratitude, "that when I did come out of my room and found nothing but fire and smoke about me, and saw no chance of escape, I recollect perfectly thinking of Mr. Mowbray, and though I was certainly grieved at fancying that I never should see him again, still I was very grateful to Providence for strengthening me to resist temptations, and I felt how very much that feeling took away from the horrors of the death that I then supposed I was going to die."

The latter part of this observation was unanswerable, except by the former, and it certainly appeared to Lady Madelaine that the almost unconscious admission that the idea of seeing Harry no more was one of the causes of anguish at a moment when a horrible death seemed inevitable ; it was just possible that in the single combat that was going on in Clara's mind between passion and scruple, the latter might finally succumb. She judged however that enough had been said for the present, and merely remarking, "Well, I wish you could be persuaded to trust more to the certainty of your bringing Mr. Mowbray to a right way of thinking and less to a solitary text, which I do not think applies to the case,"—rose to dress for riding.

"If success were a certainty," said Clara, "it would be well, but failure is more likely, and look at the terrible consequences of it. We must think of those who are to come after us. No," concluded she, "heaven knows it is no rash determination ; it is no false pride ; it is not even the selfish wish to save myself from a painful moment that guides me ; it is the firm conviction that it is the best for us both that we should not meet, and meet him I will not,—even if my heart should break." Lady Madelaine said nothing, but it so happened that as she was going out of the room, she was met at the door by her maid, bringing her a note, and in opening it the motto on the seal caught her eye, and she could not help smiling as she read :—

"L'HOMME PROPOSE.

DIEU DISPOSE."

*Man proposes
God Disposes*

CHAPTER XXII.

DURING all this time, the two antipodal worthies had not been idle, though they had still something to do, for a cargo in the South Seas is not procured or shipped with quite the alacrity that the wharfs of New York, or Liverpool display. Still the *Albatross* was rapidly completing her cargo, and had succeeded in getting an immense quantity of flax and kowry spars on board. The friendship, however, between these two personages was a very hollow one. They certainly did very frequently drink together, for Lester's solitary tipping was so laughed and sneered at by the other that he was finally obliged to give it up, and take his glass sociably with his rougher but also heartier companion. But this species of friendship partakes too largely of the familiarity that breeds contempt, to lead to any sincere regard, and there was another cause of distrust and dissension between them. Whether Lester was really acquainted with Hastings' former life, with respect to which there was considerable mystery, or whether he merely pretended to be so, in order to acquire influence over him, the latter could not find out, but he still continued to throw out dark hints of other days when the wanderer's prospects were better, when fortune smiled and he consequently had friends, until honour and rank and station and wealth all vanished in consequence of one crime, that compelled him to expatriate himself. What this crime was, he never could be persuaded to say distinctly, but he alluded to it darkly and ambiguously, as something connected with money matters, with fraud, if not with forgery, as if it were some crime of that sort that had driven Hastings from his home. All this that personage bore with the greatest impatience, frequently defying the other to speak out and let him know what he had to say; but no, no efforts could induce him to name a specific crime; he still spoke darkly of the convenience of being out of reach of the law, but frequently observed, that in England a man was always presumed to be innocent until he was found guilty,—thereby insinuating that whatever Hastings' offence was he had not been as yet tried for it. All this was intended to a certain degree to impress upon Hastings that he was in his power, but in that object it wholly failed, whether from natural hardihood of disposition, or from the consciousness of not being amenable to the laws, the other shewed not the slightest symptom of fear, but very strong systems of aversion, his answers became shorter, and exhibited more of a contemptuous impatience; his dislike was exhibited with more carelessness, day after day, and more than once Lester's loquacity was checked by a look, whose savageness froze the very blood in his veins. It was, indeed, a most unfortunate course that this wretched man adopted. The law is terrible enough, when it has constables, judges, juries, sheriffs, at its back, in England; but the law in New Zealand is that every man should do what he pleases, and even if there had been law there, Lester could not have enlisted it on his side, for

he in reality knew nothing about Hastings' former career, never having seen him until he boarded the *Albatross*, when she let go her anchor in the Bay of Islands. His watchful eye, however, soon remarked that the second mate of the new trader was not made of the sort of stuff that commonly comes in at the hawse holes. He quickly saw that he *had* been a gentleman, and that, moreover, he was even, for a man of rank, highly educated and well informed, upon which matters Mr. Lester, for reasons connected with *his* former life, was a very tolerable judge; and seeing him now in the humble situation of second mate. a rank, excepting in so far that it is a stepping stone to the higher commands, little removed from that of a common sailor; for the second mate of a merchant ship, though receiving higher wages than the crew, lives with them, messes with them, goes aloft, and, as the phrase is, "has not got his hand out of the tar-bucket," the deduction was inevitable, that he was a scamp, and Mr. Lester, having a certain degree of vulgar cunning, and consequently a great opinion of his own penetration, immediately set himself about conjecturing how he became so, being well aware that if the maxim, *Poeta nascitur non fit*, which he had learned, by memory, at school, be true, the aphorism, *Nemo repente turpissimus*, which he had learned by experience since, is not less so. The stranger's knowledge of seamanship, at first induced the idea he was a dismissed naval officer; but Lester soon discovered the traces of a more extended classical education than commonly falls to the lot of those gentlemen who are engaged in the active duties of their profession, at a time of life that others are vibrating between Horace and the birch; and he also learned that when Hastings shipped on board the *Albatross*, though a tolerable sailor, he seemed to know little of square rigged vessels, his practice had evidently been on board fore and aft rigged craft, which were probably yachts, and his next conjecture seemed to him more satisfactory. It was that his expatriation had arisen from some fraudulent transaction connected with money, breach of trust, dishonest bill transactions, tampering with wills, or perhaps even direct forgery, such being commonly the character of the crimes which make outcasts of the higher classes; and he fancied that by pretending to a knowledge of the mysterious sailor's private history, he might not only acquire an influence over him, which he might hereafter turn to account, but also acquire the very knowledge to which he pretended. It was an instructive instance of the cunning that overreaches itself; he gained nothing, but this much he did, in a country in which there was then neither conscience, law, justice, or mercy, he provoked and irritated a reckless and dangerous man, who, whether he really believed that Lester could expose him to the vengeance of the law, certainly thought he might prove a serious inconvenience to him, and was not very particular how he provided against that contingency, and moreover never forgot or forgave his curiosity about the picture.

It was soon after one of these conversations, in which Hastings had shewn himself more than usually impatient of the affected knowledge of his companion, that the latter found it necessary to proceed across the country to the Bay of Islands, a journey which necessitated an

absence of several days. Knowing the country well, and being by no means overburdened with superfluity, the whole of his real and personal property being easily carried in a pocket handkerchief, he travelled alone, which he could do in safety, as he was known to be under the protection of a powerful chief; and it so happened that on his return, when about half a day's journey from Warrangoa, he fell in with Hastings, also alone, in the woods. Whether the latter was really prowling about with the intention of meeting his victim, or whether the encounter was accidental, it is now impossible to say. Lester had no suspicions, and being somewhat tired with his journey, he immediately proposed that they should sit down under the shade of a tree and partake of some provisions he had with him, at the same time expressing great joy at the meeting, as he had something of importance to communicate. The other assented, and they sat down apparently amicably together; but the communication was by no means agreeable to Lester. It was simply this, that being tired of savage life, and seeing no chance of bettering himself in New Zealand he intended applying to the master of the Albatross for a passage home. As he had no means of paying for this, he would have, of course, to work it, and though not much of a seaman, he was a good penman and accountant, and would make himself generally useful in the cabin.

Such being the state of matters, it was naturally an object to him to acquire even the humble patronage of the second mate; but, unfortunately for him, there is a right and wrong way of doing everything, and in this instance he blundered upon the latter. There was a careless good-nature about Hastings' disposition, as long as he was not roused, that would probably have induced him to give anybody any assistance he could, providing it did not inconvenience himself, and as the skipper certainly deferred to him more than skippers commonly defer to second mates, he might very probably have procured the other the passage he wished for, but that the wretched man, with an unfortunate cunning, instead of appealing to his compassion or his good nature, thought fit to attempt to work upon his fears; and the first hint that he dropped about the safety that Hastings might secure to himself by entering into his views, as well as the possible consequences of his not doing so, suggesting to the other another mode of freeing himself from an annoyance, probably sealed his own fate. In the solitude of those ancient woods, no mortal eye saw the scowl of the murderer gather in the savage glance with which Hastings met this intimation. No mortal eye saw his hand, quivering with rage, steal instinctively to the light tomahawk, which most men carried in a country where the passage through the woods was constantly impeded by the thickness of the vegetation, and by a troublesome undergrowth of a creeping rattan that overspread much of the ground; nor did mortal ear hear the muttered aphorism whose fatal truth has sealed the doom of so many an unhappy wretch, by determining the last resolve of the assassin, 'dead dogs do not bite.'

"You must have seen some strange things in your own time?" said he, in a hollow voice of suppressed emotion, that would have attracted most men; but Mr. Lester was too busy with some cold pork, to mark the

sign of the coming tempest,—the little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand.

"Nothing to speak of, sir," said he, "I have not led a very troubled life. My youth was peaceful, though since that I have been somewhat knocked about."

"You got a tolerable education?" asked Hastings.

"Yes," said the other, "I did; my father, sir, was an Independent minister, as well educated as most of that class are, but latterly he was thrown on the world, and we had great difficulties."

"How was that?" asked Hastings.

"Why, sir," returned the other, "for a long time my governor and his flock jogged on very amicably together; he confined his preaching to doctrinal and controversial points, and his whole flock were as pleased as pleased could be to hear him hold forth on the spiritual tyranny of the bloated establishment, on the majesty of independent judgment, and so forth, but unhappily he caught a fever once that nearly carried him off, and he rose from his sick bed with a queer idea that a minister is responsible for the lives and morals of his flock. This notion floored him; for it so happened that he had a very small flock; though, being composed of opulent individuals, it had hitherto given him a decent subsistence. Now, however, the want of numbers told, for among so few he had only one specimen of each vice, so that every sin he denounced, the cap fitted one and only one, which was very unfortunate, for if there had been only two of each particular sin, he might have abused it till doomsday, for each would have said his preaching was directed at the other, and would have been delighted at it, you know. However, the moment he began to try and teach his congregation to lead virtuous lives in charity with all men, as he called it, they dropped off one by one. He unhappily took the fourth commandment as a text, and a comfortable greengrocer declared it was aimed at him, and left the congregation; the seventh cost him a surgeon that was rising rapidly into practice; and the eighth a pious pawnbroker; a serious tallow-chandler's widow, who had a taste for tea-parties, took fire at the ninth; and I believe if he had attempted the tenth, the whole congregation would have seceded bodily; but he gave in before that, for out of the hundred and fifty pounds a-year he received from his congregation, one hundred and ten were paid by those who felt themselves aggrieved by the commandments, so it was no use preaching any more. The value of the flock, you know, is in the shearing."

"Well, and what became of you, then?" asked Hastings, with a peculiar hesitation and irresolution of manner, for a ghastly struggle was going on in his mind,—he was apprehensive that Lester, should he once reach England, might be extremely troublesome, as he had already shewn himself inclined to be; indeed, between his curiosity and his cunning he might be dangerous,—the opportunity of disposing of this matter once and for ever might probably never occur again; it was tempting, but still it is no light matter to resolve upon murder, and even then the unfortunate man might have escaped had he had the slightest perception of his danger,—but no, he seemed smitten with

blindness, and went on with his half expressed threats in utter unconsciousness of the fate that he was provoking.

"Why," said he, "I tried the literary world, and though I had no great success as an original author, I did the criticisms for several weekly papers for some time, but the market became overstocked; authors started up like mushrooms after the peace, and broke down by basketfuls at a time, and every broken-down author becomes a critic; and as they drank water, and I drank gin and porter, they could do it cheaper, and they underbid me; so, you see, I am a reduced gentleman like yourself—(the scowl upon Hastings' face became deeper and deeper). However," continued Lester, with a wink, "when I go back to England, I dare say you will lend me a hand to find some decent way of getting a livelihood?"

"I can neither lend you a hand or anything else," answered Hastings, sullenly, his mind fast settling into the dogged resolution to obey the voice of the demon that was whispering *KILL* in his ear.

"Can't you, indeed," said Lester, with a cunning leer, "perhaps means might be found to induce you; those that hide know where to find. You would not like to see a friend in distress—or a judge on the bench?"

"What in the devil's name have you been driving at this last six weeks?" said Hastings, angrily; "What is a judge on the bench to me?"

"Never mind," said the doomed wretch, "we're all safe among friends, no one likes to be introduced to twelve freeholders; to be sure the sheriff of the county has an ugly knack of asking one to a dance in the air, but that little matter of yours is pretty well blown over by this time: it will stay quiet if no one peaches, and I'm sure I shall not if you come down like a gentleman."

"I have told you already that I have nothing to give you," said Hastings angrily.

"Never mind, perhaps you may serve one otherwise," was the answer. "I have a first-rate plan to propose to the ministry, about colonising in these parts of the world; one to enable it to get land cheap—do the Chiefs brown."

"What may that be?" growled Hastings. "Is every European transaction in these seas to be disgraced by fraud?"

"I'll tell you what it is," said Lester; "I'd assemble them, and inquire what they would take for their lands. Well, they'd say so much for the land and so much for the sovereignty—we'll say ten thousand for both. Then I'd have the Commissioners agree to that, and sign a treaty to that effect. Well, about a week afterwards, I'd send in a ship of war to make a demand for compensation for injuries done to British subjects, to the amount of ten thousand pounds; this would astonish their weak minds, for they have not got ten thousand shillings among them, but the Captain might say that he'd take the Commissioners' bill for ten thousand pounds, and so the Government would get the ten thousand pounds back, and the sovereignty and land would not cost the Government one farthing."

"A respectable scheme," muttered Hastings; "creditable to Christianity."

"Oh, it's a magnificent scheme," said Lester; "worthy of a great nation; but I'll want an introduction to the Colonial Secretary when we get to England. Now, you'll do that for me, you've good reasons you know."

"And why should I put myself out of my way to help you," asked Hastings, his hand again wandering to his tomahawk.

"It might be inconvenient to you if you refused," answered the other, seeing that a dispute was probable, and unhappily judging that his best plan was to put a bold face upon the matter. "I know enough to hang you."

Scarcely had the words passed his lips, ere the full extent of his danger burst upon the terrified wretch, and starting to his feet, he attempted to save himself by running, closely pursued by Hastings, who up to that moment wavering, had made up his mind the instant the other had taken to flight, and was now irrevocably confirmed by the instinct of pursuit in his determination to murder him. The prey, however, had yet to be run down; fear lent the unhappy man wings, for which the anger of the other was no match. The space between them, but a few yards at first, increased rapidly; every moment added to Lester's chance of escape, as the chance of meeting some European or friendly native increased with the extent of ground traversed, in the direction of the bay, and it is most probable that he would have outstripped his pursuer had he not unfortunately encountered one of the creeping rattans before mentioned, which, stretching across the path and unnoticed in his hurry, tripped him up, and before he could recover his legs again Hastings was upon him. A prayer for mercy, and a howl of maddened fear rang alike unheeded on the air of the lonely forest. The blow aimed at his head, missing the skull, sank deep into the back of the neck, and severing the carotid artery, destroyed life instantly, and an expression of hideous triumph burst from the lips of the murderer as the corpse rolled at his feet.



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CHAPTER XXIII.

L'HOMME PROPOSE DIEU DISPOSE.

THIS is a fact, and though ill-disposed persons, critics, sceptics, rivals, and the like, who in this wicked world vex such historical works as this, hovering, and wheeling, and screaming round them as flocks of wild geese round the northern isles, may unjustly accuse us of occasionally taking friendly liberties with facts, we are not the less admirers of this adage which as we have already narrated, formed the motto on the seal of a note, (and a motto in such a place sometimes conveys almost as much as a postscript,) which note was received by Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine, at the close of a conversation with Clara, and which seemed to be singularly applicable to that conversation, and the resolution expressed at the conclusion of it, by the young lady, whose determination she had nevertheless failed to shake.

She then proceeded to investigate its contents, which were found to relate to various weighty matters connected with an archery meeting then preparing in the neighbourhood, which was to take place, or take flight, if such be considered a more appropriate expression, the following Tuesday, and in the programme of which it was found necessary to have recourse to much previous arrangement. It was only the second year of the fête, and the year before, experience not having given her assistance to the newly-raised levies of amazons, the leaders of the Toxophilite array were unaware that much of the success, if not all, in any operation either of real or mimic warfare, ancient or modern, depends upon the arrangements of the commissariat, a fact unromantic in itself, and exceedingly hard to drive into heads of the admirers of heroes and great battles, but perfectly well understood by the leading performers in those grave dramas themselves. On the former occasion much inconvenience had arisen when the contribution to the dinner from each of the neighbouring houses was laid on the table. The amount of this impost had been previously, carefully, and equitably assessed, on the principle of a moderate per centage upon the average weekly smoke of the kitchen chimney for the three months preceding, and though this arrangement was admirable as to principle, some grave complexities arose when the details came to be carried out, for as the impost was paid in kind, and without concert between the contributors, the provisions, when collected, more resembled sea stock for a long voyage than comestibles for a pic-nic, inasmuch as there were six hams and fourteen tongues as pendants to three moderately-sized fowls and a veal pie, which was considered a reversal of that due harmony of proportion, without which there is no beauty.

To guard against any such untoward events, on this occasion it had been agreed that a bill of fare should be prepared, whereby each indi-

vidual should know exactly what cold meat to bring, and of this document we submit a copy, premising that it is the production of a young gentleman who had recently been employed in working out certain difficult calculations, uncial and semi-uncial, connected with the minimum average weekly quantity of animal or vegetable food, or other nutritious substance (if any such could be discovered) capable of keeping a water-gruel sort of life in the bodies of those who have no friends. This peculiar branch of homicidal economics, involving the delicate operation of letting the life escape, when it did become attenuated enough to slip through their fingers in such a manner as to evade the outlying picquets of the law, the coroners' inquests, was considered as giving him a more than usually distinct perception into the nature of what the rich call a **BILL OF FARE**, and live by, and the poor call a **DIET TABLE**, and die by, and the following was the produce of his brain :—

	Cold Roast Turkey.	Pair of Fowls.	Ham.	Pair of Tongues.	Beefsteak Pie.	Veal Pie.	Roast Beef.	Cold Lamb.	Salad Oil, Vinegar, &c.	Bread, Potatoes, &c.	Pepper, Salt, Mustard, &c.	Jelly.	Italian Cream.	Gooseberry Tart.	Currant Tart.	Fruit.
Marchioness of Ellesmere	1	1	1						1	1	1	1	1		1	1
Viscountess Wycherley				1	1				1	1	1	1	1			1
Lady Mary Sternhold		1			1				1	1	1	1	1			1
Lady Ellen Hopkins				1		1			1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Lady Wharton	1	1			1				1	1	1	1	1			1
Mrs. Jones West Jones																
Smith Jones Jones			1		1		1		1	1	1			1	1	1
Mrs. de Popkinsonne		1			1	1			1	1	1			1	1	1
Mrs. Park Lane		1					1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1
GRAND TOTAL	2	5	2	2	5	2	2	4	8	8	8	4	4	4	4	8

For the rest, the programme was a good deal of shooting, to commence at one, a good deal of eating to commence at five, a good deal of dancing to commence at seven, with lemonade, new bonnets, soda-water, flirtations, gypsies, and other objects of interest, a *discretion* during the day, and a full moon, to help the party in any little matter it might require during the night; such as giving occasion to diverse allusions to Diana, as forming a sort of classical connection between archery and lunacy, chaperoning sentimental speeches, as is the business of the moon, and so forth.

The scene of this entertainment was admirably chosen, being the partly ruined castle of Coningsborough, whose origin was traced to the time of the Saxons, of whom a monument still remained in its massy round keep. This had been the original seat, what the

Germans, who do know something about ancestral matters, would call the Stam Schloss of the Fitzwarines, in whose family it had been since the Conquest; indeed that particular estate had been conferred upon the founder of that ancient house, in consequence of his having at the battle of Hastings, slain the Lord of Coningsborough with his own hand, in token and attestation of which exploit a picture, courteously termed 'historical,' hangs to this day in the great hall of Ellesmere, wherein is depicted the turn of the day, where the unthinking Saxons, having for the third time fallen into the trap of a pretended flight, received that blow from which no army recovers, the smash after the reserve is engaged, and the fortunes of Harold became irretrievable. The confusion and turmoil of the fight is depicted with great spirit and fidelity, the portrait of the Norman Prince is considered perfect, as indeed it ought to be, having been taken from a half-penny of that monarch's; a blow of a Saxon club, wielded by a singular looking character in a very liberal undress with a sort of oak-leaf sash round his waist, has just swept off the crest from his helmet, probably with a view of making room for the crown that was settling on it at the moment, the valiant Bastard has returned the compliment, good measure and overflowing, by striking off the Saxon's head with his long two-handed sword, nothing can be more perfect than the expression of the Duke's face as the head rolls in the dust before him, you can see him saying, 'Ah ha! you've caught it my boy,' like the Apollo Belvedere. The back ground is crowded by the dark columns of the mailed men at arms, pressing recklessly on, and trampling alike on friend and foe, for the hour is at hand when no man pauses or pities, the hour of victory; there is but one thought in all men's hearts, one word in all men's mouths, and that word is 'forward;' and as the tide of war rolls boilingly onward, a prominent figure in the melee, leading on the Norman horse to the crushing charge, that converted their commander's sword into a sceptre, is Sir Reginald Fitzwarine, who has just struck down the Saxon Lord of Coningsborough with his battle-axe.

It is not alleged that this picture would be taken as evidence to the title to the estates in a court of law, though it does the painter great credit; it having been, in fact, painted six or seven centuries after the event, during the greater part of which time the only title deed ever produced, to attest the property in their lands, by the ancestors of the Marquis were the instruments by which they were acquired, viz. the sword and the spear, but those were sufficient.

The tradition was, however, always preserved in the family, who considered Hastings an ancestral battle, much as a Wodehouse may Agincourt, or in future days when time has hallowed it a Wellesley may Waterloo. This conclusive fight that made them landed men, was however, not the only field where the banner of Fitzwarine led the war. On the sternly debated day of Crecy⁺ at the particular moment when the King refused to send succour to his son, then sorely pressed, the headlong valour of the Fitzwarine of that time would not be repressed, and reckless of the royal injunction, he plunged into

the combat where the gallant prince, outnumbered and outwearied, could hardly make head against his foes. A handful of fresh lances, that would have weighed but little an hour before, told heavily now, when victory was trembling in the balance, the result of that action is matter of history, and though the king reproved the disobedience of the soldier, the father seems not to have forgotten the timely assistance rendered to his gallant son, for the Fitzwarines, who had hitherto ranked among the Barones minores, thenceforth placed the coronet of their country over their ancient shield, which was farther charged with a windmill, to commemorate the building whence Edward watched the progress of the battle, and their barony bears the significant date, August 1171: MCCCLXXI:

We find the impetuous young baron in high favour with King Edward in the succeeding year, and holding a high command at the siege of Calais, which is also commemorated in the arms of Ellesmere, one of whose supporters is an alderman, proper, haltered, not as a symbol of municipal reform, but as a memento of the well known story of the surrender of that famished town. Their good star was now in the ascendant, and thence forward the fortunes of Fitzwarine rose almost as steadily as those of Mowbray declined, the name of the Barons of Creci appear almost continuously on the rolls of the privy council, in times when that august body was really the council of ministers, and having once persuaded the faithful Commons (often by the threat of cutting the Speaker's head off) to grant them what supplies they stood in need of, admitted of no such nuisance as responsible government, and rendering no accounts to any one whatever, laid the money out on themselves like the Corporation of London.

As the importance of the family increased, the size of the castle decreased, that is to say in its owner's eye, not positively by collapse, but relatively by comparison. It did very well for the warlike barons, but was considered inconveniently small when the barony became an earldom, and when soon after the restoration, the seventh earl married the heiress of Ellesmere, whose extensive estates nearly surrounded the manor of Coningsborough, the old castle was abandoned and the stately towers of Ellesmere thenceforth became the residence of the family, who, in accordance with a stipulation in the marriage settlement, took the title of Ellesmere when they attained the next step in the peerage.

As far as its appearance went, it was fortunate that it was abandoned so early, for being left to decay immediately after the civil war, it thus preserved its character of a feudal fortress, and became a picturesque ruin, instead of presenting the appearance of a house in chancery, as would probably have been the case had it been inhabited to a more recent period. It was pleasingly situated in a gently rising ground; the outer walls were yet perfect, though most of the buildings had been removed; the keep and principal dwelling house however yet stood. The great hall of the latter, though deprived of its stern garniture of arms and armour, which had gone to ornament the lordly halls of Ellesmere, was fitted up in a style of sylvan simplicity that spoke more of the hunter than the baron; on its walls hung stage'

horns, foxes heads, bugle horns, bows cross and long, and various designs composed of arrows, which altogether gave it a character admirably suited to the purpose to which it was generally applied—that of accommodating assemblages of the nature that was collected on the present occasion. On its eastern side was a large enclosure, which had probably served in troublous times to protect the cattle of the vassals when war drew nigh; the wall or mound that surrounded it had long since become nothing but a somewhat elevated ridge, and the lawn it rather bounded than enclosed, was as smooth as a bowling green, and answered admirably for an archery ground. Close beyond it arose ancient woods, from whence an occasional pheasant would stray, and judging from its own experience of mankind, marvel greatly in its mind, what earthly amusement, excitement, or pleasure, so many human creatures could find in shooting at anything that they could not kill.

The clerk of the weather seemed to be in good humour on the day of the fête, for a brilliant sun, with just clouds enough to obscure him every now and then—clouds that one was not sorry to see and rather glad to get rid of—shone on the party as it started from Ellesmere, augmented by Lord Chorley, who had arrived the evening before, happy to escape from the turmoil of London, where the unequalled bitterness of the party strife that was going on in Parliament, had found its way into private society to an extent that made him feel that Ellesmere, even with the accompaniment of a pitched battle a day, with Lady Sarah Fitzwarine, would be a heaven of peace and quietness. The party started in three carriages; and Lady Madelaine and Lady Sarah having occupied a britschka, our hero also seated himself there, and at this moment Lord Chorley passed seeking a place.

“Oh come in here, Lord Chorley,” cried Lady Sarah eagerly, with a most winning smile, which his Lordship thought nothing more than his due, for she had quizzed him unmercifully all breakfast time, and scolded him afterwards, for not bearing it as patiently as she thought he ought. “Come in here,” and as the young nobleman, much pleased at this unexpected mark of her preference, obeyed, and with a smiling alacrity completed the party, she observed, “I’m tired of Mr. Wilkins’ tomfooleries, and am more in the humour for yours.”

“I’m only too happy to be able to bring you what pleases you best,” returned his Lordship somewhat tartly; for though he really liked her at heart, she sometimes provoked him.

“Now do not, for Heaven’s sake, attempt to be witty,” said she. “I hate witty people, they do so labour and make others labour. Is it true, Lord Chorley, that when you went to that great bail in July, that somebody gave, and Lady Martingale asked all the people to, that you had gloves made with smart sayings stamped on the palms that you might bring out on occasions, so as to be sure of being able to say something clever sometime or other during the evening.”

“What, go about the world with one’s witticisms at one’s fingers end?” replied his Lordship, laughing. “No, I go clean handed into court. I do not think you can accuse me of any very violent attempt to shine in conversation.”

“Indeed, I do not,” replied Lady Sarah, with a comic earnestness,

and then, suddenly changing her point of attack from his hands to his head, she demanded, "How, on earth, can you wear that white hat?—it looks so horribly radical, you might as well wear the 'bonnet rouge' at once."

"If the covering is an indication of what is passing in the head, what does a straw bonnet indicate," demanded his Lordship.

"Oh, a straw bonnet means nothing. Besides which women are not political—at least they ought not to be. I'm sure that I do not know the difference between Whig and Tory, except that I know the Whigs want to take every thing they can from us, which they call reform and I call robbery, and that they wear white hats. They take their fashions, only just think of that Mr. Mowbray, the Whigs take their fashions from such people as Hunt and Cobbet, one makes blacking and the other makes mock coffee, and they set the fashions to the Whig gentlemen. I'm sure I do not know where on earth the ladies get their fashions from."

"By-the-bye, Sarah," said Lady Madelaine, "have you seen the uniform of the club. I hear it is something very odd."

"I have not the least doubt it is hideous," replied Lady Sarah, "for the Sternholds invented it, and they never had an atom of taste, and besides have been out of their minds about mountains, and mountaineers, and characteristic costumes, ever since those Tyrolese singers came over. I am very glad we escaped belonging to it."

"So am I," said Lady Madelaine. "I am sadly afraid of their having invented something ridiculous, and I shall be sorry if the meetings were discontinued, it is such a pleasant friendly way of meeting."

"Indeed, I hope most sincerely they have invented something ridiculous," said Lady Sarah, earnestly.

"But you sacrifice your chance of the silver arrow, by not belonging to the club," said Lord Chorley.

"Oh, there is a locket to be shot for, that may be of some use, which the arrow never could be, and it is open to what Mrs. Jones calls Archer England." They soon arrived at the scene of tents and targets, and as they drove into the court of the castle, Harry observed Lady Madelaine's eye fix on the mouldering shield of her house over the archway, with an expression as if the consideration that those walls had held her ancestors for seven centuries had flashed across her mind. Lady Sarah cast a glance at the gloomy walls: they suggested different thoughts to her.

"Were you ever in prison, Lord Chorley?" said she.

"No," returned the young nobleman.

"Nor in the watch-house?"

"No."

"But Lord Walton and Sir Thomas Cribb were."

"Well, that is no reason why I should be."

"No, but I thought you were birds of a feather."

"I hardly know them," was the answer.

"Did you never break lamps?"

"No."

"Well, you are better behaved than I thought you were, no, I don't know—I'm afraid you are a hypocrite," said she, as she dismounted

from the carriage; "it is a shocking vice—hypocrisy, Lord Chorley. Now give me my boa. No; put it back again—it is too hot. Did you ever see a battle fought with bows and arrows, Mr. Mowbray," and she tripped on to the ground without waiting for an answer.

All preparations were already made for commencing the sport, waiting the arrival of Lady Ellesmere who had been elected the patroness for that year, an office which was styled in the records of the club "the Maid Marian," expressive of her presidential dignity. The club was assembled, and their uniform certainly did give the scene something of a distinctive character. The fair Amazons, to the number of fourteen, wore a very peculiar species of high-crowned pyramidal hat, coming to a peak, adorned with an eagle's feather, giving them a very Tyrolcse and buy-a-broomish appearance, which was however much modified by an arrangement whereby it was settled that a part of their head-dress should consist of long and luxuriant ringlets, those who were in the habit of wearing their hair braided or otherwise secured, availing themselves of the friendly aid of the perruquier. The effect was excellent, though not perhaps so perfect as it would have been had the suggestion of Miss Jones West Jones Smith Jones Jones, whose locks were rather redder than she liked, been followed. This young lady, who imbibed a high opinion of the beauty of uniformity of appearance from her father, who had once been a captain in the reserve battalion of the Coningsborough provincial local volunteers, a fencible corps, which had been intended to have been raised in case their services should have been required, had a French expedition landed as some expected about the time of the battle of Trafalgar, proposed that the whole club should abolish their natural hair on this occasion, and wear ringlets of the same colour, observing that nothing could be more sylvan or Maid Marianish than nut-brown locks. This proposition however was overruled, her fair comrades set their faces decidedly against any such liberties being taken with their heads; the agricultural young ladies spoke symbolically of carrots, those of a horticultural turn metaphorically of tomatoes, a poetical damsel repeated a passage from Lord Byron beginning,—

"Lo, where the Giant on the mountain stands
His blood red tresses deepening in the sun ;"

and altogether, each individually considering her own hair the most killing colour, as a fisherman would say, declared collectively that they would let well alone.

A species of green pelisse, with a good deal of braiding, formed the principal garment of this sylvan corps, confined at the waist by a belt, whence depended a quiver; this pelisse reached a little below the knee, and here the sylvan character of the dress yielded to maternal authority, and the nineteenth century re-appeared in the shape of gowns of various materials and divers patterns, which some, however, thought fit to ornament with festoons of wild flowers, as if they had just made a long journey on foot through the forest, dragging their weary limbs through bramble and briar, and carrying with them the tokens thereof.

The gentlemen were attired to correspond, saving that they bore a cross belt, curiously embroidered with boars' heads, stags' horns, and

bugles alternately, so as much to resemble in general effect those badges of their office carried by rat-catchers : from this belt hung hunting knives in green velvet cases, and bugle horns to record the successful shots of their fair colleagues, intimidate any intrusive dogs that might be inclined to play at fetch and carry with the arrows, call in the stragglers at dinner-time, and the like. They, however, wore black plumes (horse-hair) in their hats, which gave them a banditti and anti-abbot appearance, as if they would have thought nothing of robbing a church, and not much of eating a sheriff, and maintained their character of sylvan outlawry from top to toe for their black braided green anonymouses, terminated in hessian boots, of a species of lion colour.

Upon the arrival of the Ellesmere party, and the interchange of inquiries about their children's measles, acquisition of words, growth of teeth, &c. customary among matrons, and the affectionate embraces of the damsels, which Sir Thomas Horton stated to be more energetic in proportion to the number of gentlemen looking on to be tantalised, the assemblage voted itself a quorum, and proceeded to business, that is to say pleasure; the prize of the day, the silver arrow was conspicuously displayed to stimulate the skill of the competitors, the targets were erected, a line was traced with roses to mark where the shooter was to stand, on the right hand of which the club, the regulars of the host were drawn up in battle array, the ladies in front of the line, which had a most imposing appearance; on the left hand were the irregular ladies, with their attendant cavaliers. The bugles blew a long and warning note, which drooped away gradually in the most romantic manner as each blower's breath was exhausted, one by one they dropped off, till the stoutest among them melted away in a dying fall; there was silence, the young lady, Miss Wycherly, who was to lead off, bow in hand, took her station by the roses, looked very earnestly and impressively at the target, and raised the arrow to her eye, the gentlemen at the same moment raised their bugles to their lips to salute her success, and immediately replaced them by their sides, for the arrow went at least five yards wide.

This was provoking : the young lady blushed, looked as amiable as circumstances required, and retired, with a most sincere hope that the next essayist in toxology might have precisely the same success as herself, in which she was gratified, for Miss Jones West Jones Smith Jones Jones made to the full as bad a shot as she had done; nor did the next fare better, for the fact was, that although at their last meeting they had got on very well, the vaulting ambition that overleaps itself, had on this occasion unfortunately prompted them to take liberties with space, which is well known to resent such liberties, they had increased their range, and in a geometrical progression with that increase, the distance between their shots and the mark had increased also. Towards three o'clock a serious and unforeseen difficulty arose, with respect to the decision as to who was the winner of the prize, all having had their regular number of shots, but nobody having as yet hit the target. Various proposals were made as to the settlement of this knotty question. Lady Sarah wished it to be decided by a race, which she said was classical, as

Diana and her nymphs must have depended as much upon their fleetness of foot, as upon their accuracy in shooting, to secure their game ; and, moreover, she appealed to history, (that is to say to Scott's *Ivanhoe*, which was about the extent of her historical reading) to prove that Maid Marian must often have been indebted for her safety to her speed.

Her lady mother, in her character of the Maid Marian of the day, protested against this, and Lady Madelaine proposed drawing lots, since bowstrings were drawn in vain. The proposition did not meet with a better reception, the young ladies being of opinion that they could play at pitch and toss in straw bonnets and shawls, but that being dressed for the purpose, they must play at archers ; and Lord Chorley, like a statesman as he was, seeing how public opinion tended, took a lead in that direction, and acquired great credit for having met the emergency in the spirit of the times, by proposing that they should shoot the sweepstakes over again, at a distance which would probably enable some one to hit the target, if they had any luck. This reasonable proposition was ultimately adopted, though not without some considerable difference of opinion in the assembly. Some who prided themselves upon their consistency, stood gallantly out for the original impracticable distance, others contended that half measures never did any good, and that the range ought to be at once reduced to a distance, that would enable everybody to hit the mark, and leave the match to be decided by the greatest number of bulls' eyes : some thought that an agreeable variety and interest might be infused into the pastime by an arrangement, whereby each shooter was to draw lots, to decide at what distance she was to shoot, whilst others again wished that the practice should take place from horseback, or rather from ponyback, and that each fair archer should take her shot at full gallop. Upon the whole, however, Lord Chorley's proposition, seeming the most reasonable, was adopted, for want of a better, and the affair recommenced.

"You stupid creature," said Lady Sarah to his Lordship, "if you had only left them alone, we should have had a battle royal, that would have afforded us amusement for every evening this next fortnight. What on earth could have put such a common-place idea into your head ? You ought to be ashamed of yourself : what did we come all this way for, except to be amused, and now the moment anything worth seeing turns up, you go and throw cold water upon it with your very wise plans—I hate a very wise man."

"Why, really," remonstrated his Lordship, "there was nothing else to be done ; it was only common sense."

"Common sense !—uncommon nonsense ! the idea of bringing common sense to the meeting of the Coningsborough Toxophilite Society. You might just as well bring down the owls out of the ivy on that old tower there. Did you ever see the view from that tower ?"

"No, never ; I never have been here before," replied the young nobleman.

"Come up, then, and I will act as your *cicerone*, though you don't

deserve it," said she, "and expound to you the names and natures the different mansions that you will see from there and their inhabitants;" and followed by Henry Mowbray, she led the way towards the tower. The tower in question was not the keep of the castle, but had been originally a gateway, and as was not uncommon in other days, its upper stories had served for a prison. It had been long abandoned and neglected, but the solid vaulting of its stone floors had resisted time, the iron bars yet remained in its narrow windows, and its walls were perfect except on the roof, where a thick and solid growth of ivy, the accumulation of centuries, had in some places displaced stones, which had yielded to the blast of some hundred of winters, and the battlements had mostly crumbled away. A sarcastic question from his Lordship as to how long the windmill had been in the family arms, and whether it was supposed to communicate any of its properties to the family character having been duly answered, they arrived at the foot of the winding staircase that led to the top of the tower: and Lord Chorley observing that it was, as is commonly the case, very steep and very narrow, prepared to ascend first, and was immediately catechised as to what part of his education was it that taught him to walk before a lady.

"Just as you please," returned he, with a shrug of his shoulders, laughing and making way for her, as Lady Sarah commenced the ascent. By the time, however, she had reached the first landing place, the motives of his Lordship's proposal to precede her, occurred to her, and with something of a blush, she issued her commands, that the gentlemen should go on first, thereby depriving them of the contemplation of a remarkably well-turned ankle, and something more, which had rejoiced their eyes, during the ascent of the first flight of stairs. Just at this moment they were startled by a stone dropping on the outside.

"There is somebody on the top," said Lady Sarah, as they continued to mount.

"The owls you spoke of are disturbed by your visit, Lady Sarah," said Lord Chorley; "they are preparing to receive you with a general too-who."

"Well, the owl is the emblem of wisdom," replied her Ladyship; "it will be a novelty to see anything of the sort."

"I do not know anything about their wisdom," said Harry, who led the party; "but the morality of the owls that live here must be very bad, for they are swearing horribly."

They now emerged upon the roof, and found that the questionable sounds proceeded from Sir Thomas Horton, who was standing on the very verge of the roof, at a place where the whole of the parapet had disappeared, leaning against a large trunk of ivy, and muttering execrations to himself. As they stepped out on the platform, the noise they made startled him, and turning suddenly round, he lost his balance, and instantly fell from the top of the tower. In his fall, however, he caught at the ivy against which he had been leaning; and one hand was still visible above the roof. There was yet time to save him, and

oth gentlemen sprang eagerly forward ; but Lady Sarah, with a loud shriek, seized Lord Chorley, and for a moment prevented his assisting in the work, exclaiming—

“ Do, for heaven’s sake, not go near the brink, he’ll certainly drag you down with him.” His Lordship, however, probably not considering that men’s lives are to be thrown away upon such grounds, shook her off, perhaps a little roughly, and immediately joined Harry, who had already succeeded in catching hold of the collar of Sir Thomas’s coat, whilst at the same time he steadied himself by means of the ivy, whose solid trunk, amounting almost to timber in girth and strength, afforded ample security, and Sir Thomas’ own hands being by this means freed, their combined efforts speedily replaced him in safety at the top of the tower.

“ Thank you, gentlemen,” said Sir Thomas, as he stood once more on the roof, with as undisturbed self-possession, as if nothing whatever had happened ; “ thank you, that little matter was too close to be pleasant, holding on by the eyebrows is very well at sea, but it is no joke ashore.”

Notwithstanding that she had been the means of preventing Lord Chorley from taking the prominent part he otherwise would, in the saving the endangered man, Lady Sarah was now somewhat displeased that he had not done so.

There, thought she, Mr. Mowbray will have the credit of having saved him, and poor Lord Chorley will have none at all. Her apprehensions were, however, by no means verified by the event, for, upon descending and rejoining the party, they found that the opportunity of petting and praising a Lord was too good a thing to be neglected, and that the Coningsborough Toxophilite Society had agreed, with one voice, to bestow the whole honour and glory of the achievement, with the compliments, admiration, expressions of wonder, making of eyes, and other appendages thereunto belonging, upon the young nobleman, though to the credit of human nature it must be stated, that the eldest Miss Sternhold, so far from joining in the general chatter of applause, with which his Lordship was greeted on his return, actually had sufficient independence of mind to express to Harry her admiration of the prompt assistance he had afforded Lord Chorley in his perilous task, a civil speech, whereat Captain Mowbray, who did not attach much weight to the Coningsborough Toxophilite Society, laughed outright.

Lord Chorley’s protestations, that Harry had really taken the lead in rendering assistance to the endangered sailor, were received with an æsthetic incredulity, and extolled to the skies as instances of illustrious modesty, and he remarked with some pleasure, and much astonishment, that for upwards of an hour, after this event, Lady Sarah never once scolded or quizzed him, and he had the further triumph of finding that the alteration in the range he had suggested materially improved the practice, and some of the shots having taken effect, the silver arrow was duly awarded, and the brooch having been won by an irregular young lady, to the great disappointment of Lady Sarah, who had fully intended to win it herself, and had never stopped to

calculate that somebody else might possibly make better shooting, the party sat down to dinner, of which we have already given the bill of fare. Here Lady Sarah was once more rather more astonished than pleased, by the defection of Lord Chorley, of whom the eldest Miss de Popkinsonne seemed to have taken possession. She consoled herself, however, by bestowing a triple or quadruple allowance of smiles upon Harry, who sat next to her, and whom she had already forgiven the prominent part he had taken in the rescue of Sir Thomas. Dinner over, gypsy was the order of the day, and some of the party directed their steps towards a tent, consisting of two stolen blankets stretched upon six stolen sticks, where futurity was sold by the shilling's worth. This was some little way in the wood, and Miss de Popkinsonne still kept her hold on Lord Chorley with the tenacity of a limpet.

"Did you ever see anything so forward as Miss de Popkinsonne?" said Lady Sarah, to her sister; "how dreadfully bored Lord Chorley does look."

Upon arriving at the temple of the future, the usual scene presented itself. The swarthy sybil crouching at the opening of the little tent, the bright-eyed children, the patient donkey, and the two or three bits of hardware in tinkering, which the male part of the wandering community formed an excuse for living, without any visible means, i. e. by pilfering. Miss de Popkinsonne was the first who confronted the oracle, and received the assurance that there was a young man dying for love of her. This was not at first quite satisfactory, for she entertained a private opinion that there were six or seven at least, but her eye brightened a little when the description of the swain came, it being, as might have been expected, as accurate a verbal description of Lord Chorley, as the French Ambassador had put, in the name of the King, in his passport the last time his Lordship had crossed the channel. "It is so childish," said Sarah. Lord Chorley next tried his luck, and was informed that two young ladies were dying for love of him, which alarming information he received with becoming resignation.

"How silly," said Lady Sarah; "there is Madelaine going to try her fortune too."

Lady Madelaine, whose simplicity of attire led the gypsy to conclude that she must be a personage of no great note, was promised a rich city merchant, a coach and four, a villa near Highgate, a year of royal state at the Mansion-house, and various other luxuries of the sort to correspond, which must have exactly suited her aspirations.

"Now, Mr. Mowbray," said Lady Sarah; "you go and see what she will promise you." Probably it was that the gypsy, seeing that all the time that the others were seeking their fortunes, Harry and Lady Sarah had stood together, and spoken only to one another, and guessing from the family likeness that she and Lady Madelaine were sisters, had determined upon a more ambiguous prophecy than usual, and she affected to be exceedingly puzzled with the lines on his hand.

"You were born under Mars and Venus," said she, which being prophetic and mystical for half-pay and being in love, our hero did not deny.

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There are two young ladies, either of which would marry you if you could."

"I dare say there are, and a great many more," interrupted Lady Sarah.

"But the one that you shall marry." Here she paused a moment, looked into the face of Lady Madelaine, who was standing close to her at the moment, as if to indicate that she was to gain the prize ; "it is not this young lady," said she ; "yet the same blood runs in the veins of the wife you are to marry."

"Indeed it does not," said Lady Sarah, who conceived that she was a person thus alluded to, and thus liberally promised, and in the next moment burst into a loud laugh at her abrupt disclaimer, no one observed the malignant expression in which surprise was mingled with triumphant cunning, that Sir Thomas Horton fixed upon the gypsy. The party now bethought themselves of the actual pleasures of waltzing as compared with the pleasures of hope promised by the priestess, and speedily came to the conclusion that the bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and they left the future to the charge of Providence, and returned to the castle, Sir Thomas alone lingering behind.

The woman at first attempted the usual trick of her race with him, but a few words in a dialect which she instantly recognised, silenced her at once, and she looked at him with an expression of countenance which was a sort of almost superstitious respect was mixed with the deepest astonishment. The words being in fact a dialect of a now nearly extinct population, which Sir Thomas had encountered in the West Indies, and which he had subsequently identified with the jargon in use among the gypsies. The woman was evidently persuaded that she was in the presence of a great potentate in the gypsy hierarchy, and bowed respectfully to him.

"You are poor," said he.

"Is ice cold?" asked the woman.

"You would willingly earn money," said the knight.

"Will the hungry eat? will the thirsty drink? will the lamb seek the wolf?" was the answer.

"You shall do so," said Sir Thomas.

"Within the law?" stipulated the woman.

"Yes, how long do you remain here?"

The woman glanced at a fowl which lay as yet unplucked in the basket, as if she was speculating upon how long the neighbouring lords' patience might endure their pilfering.

"Who knows?" answered she.

"At all events," said Sir Thomas, throwing her a sovereign, "be gone from this spot at mid-day to-morrow."

The gypsy hastily pounced upon the gold, and was commencing to sing out a torrent of exclamations of gratitude, when Sir Thomas arrested her.

"There, that will do," said he, "we know what all that is worth, be gone punctually, and remember," continued he, significantly shewing his pocket, "there is more where that came from;" and with a grim smile allowed the party. He soon overtook them, for some delay had

occurred in their movements in consequence of Miss de Popl having declared that she had seen a snake, which had been away by Lord Chorley's approach. It has sometimes been remarked that the smallest serpents are the most venomous, and if this case Miss de Popkinson's serpent must have been the most of the whole race, for its minuteness prevented its being visible to other eyes but hers, but she insisted that it was about to bite her, when his Lordship drove it away and thereby saved her life. So much earnestness and such profuse professions of endless grief that it became necessary, as it sometimes does when similar incidents take place, to believe her at all events, or appear to do so.

"Now he'll fall in love with her," said Lady Sarah to herself, "an artful creature she must be.—Sir Thomas," as Sir Thomas approached, "do say some of your cross things, I want to be amused."

Sir Thomas complied, though not perhaps exactly in the manner that the young lady intended. "What force Chorley's in," with one of his peculiar smiles, walking beside her, "he looks like an impersonation of happiness."

"He's easily pleased," said Lady Sarah, biting her lip.

"You know all about it, I suppose?" said Sir Thomas.

"About what!"

"That little matter of his."

"What little matter?"

"Oh, I thought you must have been aware of it."

"I do not know what you are talking about."

"By the bye, I must go and ask Lady Wycherley, if—"

"Now do not be so provoking," interrupted Lady Sarah, "what is it?"

"Why I fancied you must have observed how deeply he is in love with Miss de Popkinson, she's an old flame of his."

"I thought they had never met before," faltered Lady Sarah.

"Oh yes, often enough, once too often perhaps."

"Nonsense, I cannot imagine his being in love with her."

"It is a fact I can assure you, I know it, to my certain knowledge he has not had a cigar for these three days. See how he is looking into her eyes, there now, did you not see that."

"What?"

"I'll be hanged if he is not winking."

Looking at this moment into Lady Sarah's eyes, he perceived great amusement that something very like winking was going on there, the peculiar action of the eyelids that commonly precedes the flow of tears,—and benevolently went on: "Yes, it's a gone case; that poor fellow, he'll not live to enjoy it, he's not long for this world."

"Not long for this world?" said Lady Sarah, "why not for this world?"

"His days are numbered," said Sir Thomas, mysteriously.

"How numbered?"

"He's booked," said the other with a nod.

"What do you mean by booked?"

"Inside place, cold meat cart," said the knight, with the most profound disregard as to time and place.

"I do not understand you," said Lady Sarah, as well she might, the slang of the hospitals not being familiar to her ear.

"Likely to lose the number of his mess."

"Is he?"

"Yes, slip his wind during the winter."

"Where is he going to pass the winter, in Switzerland?"

"I see you do not understand our sea phraseology," replied Sir

Thomas, "the fact is, poor Chorley is dying of an incurable complaint. He's a victim to an astringent prognosis."

Lady Sarah looked him full in the face for a moment, with an expression as if she could have killed him on the spot; she then became violently flushed, then turned deadly pale, and finally would have fainted, had she not observed Sir Thomas cast a most ominous glance at a very large can of water that stood at no great distance, for they had just reached the spot where the dinner had taken place.—N.B. A four-gallon can of water is a specific against fainting fits. It is worth knowing.

The rest of the archery meeting went off tolerably well, some people certainly thought that some other people might have been rather more attentive to them; Miss de Popkinsonne made some remarks to Miss Sternhold about the heartlessness of fashionable men, when Lord Chorley returned to his allegiance to Lady Sarah, who received him graciously; the dancing was exceedingly animated, the moon behaved as well as could be expected, and the entertainment broke up.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE parish church of Ellesmere, as is often the case in parishes that have belonged for centuries to the same family, was within the bounds of the park, it was about half a mile from the house, though concealed from it by a rise in the ground which had been planted a few years before, to shut out a recently erected factory, much against Lord de Creci's will, who declared that he could not understand how any one could look at the factory as long as the church was in sight. Yet in an architectural point of view the pretensions of the church were as humble as possible, it was one of those low quaint buildings whose attractions consists in the associations that belong to them, who tell a tale of generation after generation having passed under their walls, away and away, through the feelings joys and sorrows of this life to slumber peacefully in the consecrated ground around. The original building was little better than a solidly built cottage, with low walls, but a disproportionately high roof, from the centre of which rose a small belfry capped by a spire, whose highest point did not rise fifteen feet above the roof. A later age, finding the accommodation insufficient for the increasing population of the parish, had placed by its side another, which stretched about half way of its length, and in the angle formed by the two was the porch, which simple as it was, was the only part of the building that made any approach to an architectural character. It was low and wide, its roof supported by curiously carved arches, whose shape, together with some ornaments about the windows, entitled it to a place in the comprehensive ranks of gothic structures. Some venerable trees shadowed the humble mounds where the 'rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,' and several pathways led in different directions among those tombs, many of whose inscriptions had already become illegible. There were a few stray weeds, a solitary and neglected rose tree, and a new made grave, with a mattock lying by its side, completed the picture. In that church yard one human creature stood alone.

Accustomed from her youth to early rising, Clara had found that the comparatively late hours of Ellesmere, which its noble mistress, judging that youth was not the period for abridging sleep, extended to Lady Emily, left her generally an hour or two to herself in the morning, which she usually spent in enjoying the cool breezes, and fresh air of the fields, before her daily task began, and upon one of these occasions her steps turned towards the church. It was a fine clear morning in the first week in August, and as early as seven o'clock, she found herself indulging a solemn curiosity in studying the many quaint epitaphs that were to be found among the time worn memorials that crowded the churchyard. One in particular, of about a century old,

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attracted her notice : it was over the tomb of a couple whose unsparing and unceasing charity was yet gratefully remembered in Ellesmere, and at the bottom of the usual record of names and ages was the following inscription :—

~~What we gave, we have,~~
~~What we spent, we had,~~
~~What we left, we lost."~~

She was musing upon the spirit so quaintly expressed in these lines, when she heard a footstep close to her, and raising her eyes from the tombstone they encountered those of Harry Mowbray. We will not deny that notwithstanding her magnanimous resolves not to see him, she did nevertheless experience a secret thrill of pleasure at standing once more by the side of her old playmate. She had nothing to reproach herself with, she had done all that she could do, had resolutely avoided him ever since his arrival at Ellesmere, it was no fault of hers if he chose to depart so far from the usual customs of young men, as to wander about churchyards at eight o'clock in the morning, and though certainly confused and flurried by a meeting she was so little prepared for, and which she had so many reasons for wishing to avoid, she did not hesitate to receive him with the cordial welcome that her feelings with regard to him dictated.

But if Clara felt confused and agitated at this sudden encounter with one she had so carefully endeavoured to shun, he was still more flurried with meeting her he had so earnestly desired to meet, for though it was very true that ever since his arrival at Ellesmere, his eyes had anxiously examined every spot where there was the slightest probability of finding her till now that accident had thrown in his way what he had sought in vain, he could at first think of nothing better than to say that he had seen Mrs. Hastings well a few days ago, of which interesting fact his auditor was perfectly aware, he having been the bearer of a parcel to her from Mrs. Hastings, and for a few minutes they conversed upon indifferent subjects. This however was not likely to last long ; Henry knew well enough what a dreary blank a lost opportunity leaves behind it, and the first indication she gave of an intention to leave the spot, at once brought him to the subject that was nearest his heart. "I wished to see you once more before I sailed," said he, "for I cannot reconcile myself to leaving England without one effort more to remove the prejudice against me."

"Not against you, Harry," interrupted Clara.

"Well, against my opinions, which I cannot very well separate from myself," said he, "which you have conceived. I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of dismissing all hope, and with it all that makes life worth having—and God knows mine is worthless enough now." He paused for a moment, but there was no answer. Clara listened in mournful silence, but she had no words of hope to speak and no heart to speak others. "I know my own faults very well," continued he ; "I never professed to be perfection, but reckless and wayward as I have been, still you do not know with what an unceasing earnestness, I could

devote my life, my heart, my soul, to endeavour to make you happy, and I do say that I think I should succeed."

"Make yourself happy, Harry," said Clara in a tremulous voice, after a short pause, "look for happiness in the eternal truths upon which rest all peace here and hereafter, and not in a frail mortal, weak and erring as I am, and which an hour—a second—may convert into mere inanimate clay."

"I have heard of asking for bread and being given a stone," said Harry impatiently. "I hate theology, and I love you; and I believe—at least I sometimes think that I am not altogether indifferent to you."

A glance from Clara's eyes, dimmed as they were by a coming tear, was all the answer that this elicited, but words could not have expressed their meaning better or indeed so well: "And yet still you make my life a burden to me. I have no heart for any thing: a new day brings me no fresh spirits, and night brings me no rest. I have left my profession simply because if its highest honours were heaped on me they could give me no pleasure. I am going to try to escape from myself by the excitement of travel, though I know very well that the attempt will be fruitless; and yet this barrier that you raise between us and our mutual happiness is purely imaginary."

"Oh, do not say so, Henry," said Clara, "can you believe that anything but a necessity that I cannot control would ever induce me to do anything that would make you unhappy, even in the least degree."

"Well, but still I think it is imaginary," persisted the lover, whose love was by no means unmixed with impatience, "if this minute knowledge of Scripture, and this attachment to a particular system be essential, as you say it is, why are nineteen-twentieths of the inhabitants of the globe excluded from it?"

"We can only receive what is given to us," said Clara; "if we are more highly favoured than others, more is also expected from us."

"I do not know anything about those matters," replied Harry, "I know that there is a great deal of truth in the Bible and a great deal of sound morality, which accordingly priestcraft has turned into a mystery to be worshipped; that may suit the mere people, but—"

"Hush, Harry," said Clara; "do not talk so, I cannot listen to you."

"Well," said he, "I was wrong in saying so. I ought not to have said so to you; but you have driven me half mad, and I do not know what I am saying. I see it is no use attempting to persuade you now. I do not ask you to give me an immediate answer. I do not ask you to do anything against your conscience; but I do beg and pray of you to search your heart, and find out whether it really is your conscience that makes you treat me like an outcast. We shall not meet again till the spring, and what I ask is, that during that interval you will consider whether my entertaining opinions, that you call peculiar, is really and truly such an insurmountable obstacle to my happiness, as you say it is."

Clara shook her head. "I wish to heaven I could think not," said she; "you know very well that it is no wish of mine, no fault of mine that,—why if you love me," continued she, checking herself, "do you press me to commit a sin?"

"I do not look upon it as a sin," said Harry. "I think that your expectations are unreasonable. Where on earth can you find two people who think exactly alike on all subjects?"

"Those who draw their thoughts from the same source," said Clara, "will think alike."

"Not so," said Harry; "different thoughts will come from the same source. The Catholic and the Protestant draw from the same source; but their thoughts differ widely."

"I should consider marrying a Roman Catholic," answered Clara gravely, "as a virtual abandonment of the salvation of my children, in so far as any act of mine could affect them; nor do I see how a conscientious Roman Catholic could marry a Protestant, unless indeed, as they do, with the secret hope, or rather the firm conviction that she will be the means of ultimately converting him to her own faith."

"Then you do admit, that a wife may entertain a firm conviction, that she will bring her husband to her own way of thinking, and that that warrants her marrying a man, from whom she differs on religious views," said Harry, abruptly, for he fancied that he began to see light in the gloomy horizon of the future, "the opening that you leave to others, you close upon me and me alone. Do I deserve this?"

Clara was silent for a moment, for she was not altogether prepared for this turn, though she saw plainly enough where it was to lead: but still her mind was unchanged.

"No," said she, "I said, unless she entertained the secret hope, or rather the firm conviction, that she will be the means of ultimately converting him to her own faith. Now, with respect to you, I can entertain no such hope. I know you too well, not to know the difficulty of changing any opinion you have once formed, and even if that were much easier, I do not by any means imagine myself competent to the task."

"It would be easy enough for me to satisfy your scruples if I so chose," said Harry bitterly; "nothing would be easier than to profess any opinion that I thought would please you."

"I know you a great deal better," said Clara; "nothing would be more difficult to you than to express any opinions that you did not really entertain. You could not do so for one single day; no, not one single hour. But, however, I cannot stay here, as it is no use prolonging a meeting that is alike painful and useless to both of us. I make no secret of my feelings towards you. I do not deny, and never did deny, that I love you, that no man on earth shall ever call me wife but you, and that my very heart would leap for joy if I could tell you to do so."

"If you really loved me," said Harry, "you would trust me."

"I do not mistrust you," said she; "I told you before that it was your opinions that I mistrusted. I dread them and their fruits; but if you love me as you say you do, now you have the power in your own hands of making that love successful, now and never more than now. You are going now to the spot where those scenes were enacted, upon which rest the foundations of immortality. You are going to tread

the holy soil that the Saviour trod, to look back upon the sculptured record of ages, to see with your own eyes the imperishable proof of the accomplishment of prophecy upon prophecy, on the very spot where it was fulfilled, to see the truth written in eternal characters on the hills and the valleys, the cities and the plains, the rivers and the tombs, to see the earth bearing witness to the heaven ; for heaven's sake, Harry, for my sake, if you will hold me of value, do give up your pride of private judgment. I do not ask you to give it up into the hands of man, but into the hands of Him, without whose knowledge no sparrow falls to the ground, and seek in the Scriptures that truth which I know you have not yet rightly sought."

Harry's pride would hardly have yielded to this request, moderate as it was, but what the words alone would scarcely have accomplished the imploring look with which they were accompanied, indicating deep personal interest the speaker took in the success of her prayer, effected. "Since you wish it," said he, "I will consult those books that you consider as guides, and with such a prize before my eyes, you may believe that it will be with a sincere wish to believe in them, though I must say, I see little prospect of my changing an opinion, formed not without deliberation." He paused for a moment ; "and you will preserve the recollection of me," said he.

"Indeed, indeed I will," returned Clara eagerly ; "you know I will. I never can forget you. Night and day will I pray for you, that the voice that said, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me,' may whisper in your ear, and may reach your heart. Oh, Henry, I feel that a terrible question must be decided in the coming winter. I shudder to think of what may be the result. I feel, that upon the course of your thoughts during that time, depend all my hopes of happiness in this earth ; but do not for a moment fancy that for a few fleeting years of mere earthly enjoyments, and those overshadowed with gloom, I will risk the welfare of eternity, or be the mother of erring children. Your fate trembles in the balance ; if you do not believe when you stand upon the spot where stood the Redeemer, you can never believe, no, never ; if your heart is not turned then, it is hardened for ever."

She stood for a moment and gazed in his face, with an expression whose solemn earnestness was blended with something of love, that would not be repressed. Neither spoke more. An expressive glance, and a silent pressure of the hands was all the farewell that passed, as the lovers parted, with little expectations, perhaps, of a happy meeting, yet not altogether without hope. Clara was too well aware of Henry's inherent obstinacy of character to entertain any very confident expectation that the views he had adopted would be removed from his mind ; but still she was cheered by the reflection that those views, however tenaciously clung to, could not be the result of any very deep investigation, and she trusted that in the journey he was undertaking, all that he would meet in the very soil of the Scriptures, would tend, more or less, to predispose his mind towards the great change she so earnestly sought ; and she had another ground of hope, of the value of which she was fully aware. This was the influence, which Lord de Creci, in the close and intimate communion that must exist between

them, might probably exercise over him. Of the character of that gloomy, but not morose nobleman, even though she had never seen him, she had been induced to form a very high opinion, not only from the feeling, almost approaching to veneration, with which Lady Madeline regarded him, but also from the high respect with which he was looked upon by every body with whom he came in contact. That he was not only a man, honourable and high-minded in worldly matters, but also an humble and sincere follower of the gospel, she was well assured; she was also aware that it was observed of him that he almost uniformly acquired a remarkable ascendancy over the minds of all with whom he became at all intimate, which, acquired apparently without effort to himself, could only arise from an innate superiority of character, and she trusted that the friendship that evidently existed between him and Harry, would prevent the stubborn pride of the young soldier rebelling against his influence.

That such might be the case was the cherished wish of her heart, for steadfast as she was in word and deed to the line of conduct her conscience had impelled her to adopt, still, in the desolating struggle that passion was waging with principle in her breast, she had more than once felt that she was wavering, she had more than once doubted whether the bar between them was not one of her own raising. She had more than once asked herself whether she really loved him with the love she should bear to a husband, and yet refuse to risk a sacrifice for his sake. Any sacrifice for a man she truly and fervently loved, seemed a trifle in her eyes, she felt she could make it willingly; but ever as she thought of yielding, a still small voice whispered in her heart that there was a limit to sacrifices—on the confines of eternity.

She returned to the house in a happier state of mind than she had enjoyed for a long time, for whilst her spirit was buoyant with awakened hope, that when he returned from the Holy Land, his heart would be changed, the time of sorrow passed, and bright days in store; she was also cheered by the reflection that come what might, she herself had yielded no principle, and had nothing to reproach herself with.

As to Henry, he certainly to a certain degree shared in her improved spirits. It is all very well to talk of the satisfaction in knowing the worst, but there is no satisfaction in knowing that there is no hope; and our hero could by no means have entered as easily and readily as he did unto Lady Sarah's badinage, upon his arrival in the breakfast-room, had he known that he had that morning parted irretrievably and for ever from Clara Hastings.

There was one thing, however, that occurred in the course of that morning's meal, and which struck him as being very peculiar, and that was the conduct of Sir Thomas Horton towards both himself and Lord Chorley. Without in the least wishing to magnify the service they had rendered the wayward seaman, he could not help feeling that it had been a service of no ordinary importance; in fact, that had it not been for them, it was questionable whether his life would not have been lost, for it was doubtful whether any exertion of his own would ever have replaced him on the roof of the tower, or whether the ivy

by which he was suspended would have held long enough, to give time for aid to arrive from below ; and though he knew the character of the man too well to expect any very profuse or warm expressions of gratitude from him, he was not prepared for the sullen avoidance that he this morning encountered. Sir Thomas, excepting a dry "good morning," did not address one single word to either Harry or Lord Chorley. He looked more moody and morose than ever, and in fact cast a gloom over the breakfast-table, nobody knew how or why, which even Lady Sarah almost despaired of dispelling.

"Sir Thomas," said she, suddenly, "I have got a bright idea."

"No, really," returned he.

"Yes, we will get up private theatricals. Will you act?"

"What part do you intend for me?" asked the knight.

"Oh ! Blue Beard, Timour the Tartar, or any other character of the passions," returned she, with the most perfect coolness. "Perhaps you'd like Hamlet?"

"To your Ophelia."

"No, no, no, no; Ophelia is not at all in my line," returned she, hastily; "to think of my drowning myself for love,—upon second thoughts I begin to think that something like Bombastes Furioso must be the limit of our histrionic ambition."

"I do not see," said Harry, "why you should not try something better; most of the private theatricals I have seen, have been better than the public."

"To what do you attribute the amateurs beating the professors?" asked Lord Chorley.

"The stage of the present day is an exceptional case," answered Harry; "the amateurs beat the professors, because the professors debase their art to suit their audience. Their daily bread depends upon their favour with the public, and what is called the theatrical public is about as vulgar and incompetent a tribunal as ever man was subjected to, so they act *down* to their audience, whilst the amateurs act *up* to theirs."

"They can't help themselves," said Sir Thomas Horton; "they are not equal to the representation of the higher tragic parts, or even what is called genteel comedy."

"Pretenders there are among them, certainly," said Henry, "but the force of circumstances compel many to appear so, and degrade the art, who are quite equal, as far as their own abilities go, to elevating it. The value of every thing in this country is what it will fetch, and in the drama at present the counterfeit fetches more than the true metal. The stage would be immeasurably raised in dignity and importance, if performances took place at two or three o'clock in the day."

"Do you think the organ of veneration is more strongly developed after luncheon than after dinner?" asked Lady Sarah.

"The fact is," said Harry, smiling, "that as a body the higher classes in England do not frequent the theatres, they clash with dinner time, and you cannot reconcile conflicting hours, the consequence is that the actor appeals to a lower standard of taste. What is a London audience? a few families who see a play twice or thrice a year, taking

care that a pantomime should follow it if possible; a few parties from the country who come more to see the sight than the play; a few members of the liberal professions, a few clerks, and a few stray men about town, all these, together do not amount to one-fifth of the audience, but they comprise nearly the whole of its intelligence, the other four-fifths consist of the great unhoused—travellers who prefer the cheerfulness of a theatre to the dullness of a coffee-room, who merely frequent theatres because they do not exactly know what to do with themselves, and would equally go to a wild beast show, if it was equally well lighted up, and other people went. Then there are the mere pleasure-hunters, loutish grown up children, and then a large class whose objects are professedly disreputable. The great mass of this body of people, is also, to say the very least, *heavy* with wine, or in some degree more or less under the influence of liquor, yet this is the tribunal which passes judgment without appeal upon the English actor, and you may guess from the tree what the fruit will be."

"But how would altering the hour, alter this?" asked Lady Sarah.

"The plays in the morning would be attended by an audience infinitely superior in taste, cultivation, and intelligence," returned he; "the higher classes would crowd to them just as they do to the morning concerts, and the power of passing judgment upon theatricals would pass into the hands of those competent to give sound opinions; that is, of educated gentlemen who could and would judge of the drama as art, and would be guided in their decisions by the judgment of their heads, and not by the muscles of their faces. An incalculable improvement of the stage *must*, in my opinion, result from the making it an amusement of the higher classes; they would set the tone and the rest must follow,—you would soon see a different race of actors."

"Well, then, let us have Jack-the-Giant-Killer," said Lady Sarah, "I hope the speeches are short,"—and amidst a general laugh at her impatience, the whole party rose from table.

Breakfast was scarcely over before Sir Thomas disappeared, and immediately after might be seen making his way rapidly towards Coningsborough, and talking vehemently to himself. "There is nothing in the world for real mischief," said he, "like a gypsy; they take a savage pleasure in injuring the accursed busnee, as they call us, that sets them to work with a will."

CHAPTER XXV.

DATES are the bones of history (and very dry bones they are sometimes), the hard and unyielding skeleton, the outline afforded by which is commonly filled up at the pleasure of the historian, to whom the light of a fruitful imagination is a pearl of price, as much as to the younger branch of his ancient house, the composer of Historical Romance, whose productions may be considered a sort of ignis fatuus that hovers about the tombs of the dead, to dazzle and astonish the living, or to the humbler chronicler of cotemporary events, whose business lies in pursuing through the lights and shadows that are flitting about us, the ever varying chameleon which men call fancy, fashion, whim, rage, or folly, according as the goddess smiles or frowns, who may say with Pope—

Whether the charmer sinner it or saint it,
If folly grow romantic I must paint it :
Come then the colours and the ground prepare,
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air :
Choose a firm cloud before it falls, and in it
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of the minute.

Even the novelist is the slave of dates, he too clothes a skeleton in the flesh and blood of life, and as what is bred of the bone will never come out of the flesh, and the slightest irregularity in chronology distorts a whole history, it behoves those who are solicitous as to their characters to be scrupulously accurate on these matters. It is therefore not without the fullest authority that we state that on Wednesday the 17th day of August, 1831, the Royal Yacht Squadron schooner the *Arab*, the Earl de Creci, 218 tons, lay at a single anchor in the Southampton River, her topsails loose, her boats on board, and in short looking as if she were ready at the single word of her noble owner, to top her boom and be off, and at 4h. 20m. P.M., the tide being on the turn, and the wind from the N.E., the chief mate reported that all was ready forward for getting under way, the rigging fair for making sail, the cat and fish tackles rove and the fish davit handy. The skipper upon receiving this report, first looked forward, then cast a glance aloft, and seemed almost disappointed that there was nothing that he might amuse himself with altering ; the craft was in inconveniently good order for an active-minded man, whose greatest pleasure is setting to rights, and the skipper of the *Arab* was a sort of marine Alexander, who not having to deal with worlds to be conquered, wept when there were no more faults to be found. "Man the windlass," said he, and the quiet of the vessel was interrupted for a moment. "Heave away ;" the windlass revolved until the greater part of the cable was on board. "Avast heaving, that 'll do—pawl the windlass," and the windlass being secured from running back, the deck relapsed into quiet. The skipper seemed the only animate

being on board, he paced up and down the quarter deck, the crew were clustered forward on the fore-castle, as active, rough and ready, fearless-looking sea dogs as eye could desire, about five and twenty in number, for the Earl liked being strong handed; an occasional whisper passed among them, but they were commonly quiet, three or four women—wives, sisters, and sweethearts—yet lingered on board, but their loquacity was checked, for the hour of departure was near at hand, the waterman that was to take them ashore was asleep in his boat, which was made fast to the schooner, which had just swung lazily round with the ebbing tide, a gigantic Newfoundland dog lay upon the half poop, with his great head between his paws, his eyes apparently shut but really open enough to see everything that passed, his ears vigilant to catch the slightest sound, and manifestly perfectly aware that something particular was likely to happen in the history of the *Arab* that evening, and everywhere on board a complete idleness reigned, which however to the experienced eye told of complete preparation for action.

A little before five, a shore boat pulled off, containing Lord de Creci, Captain Mowbray, Mr. Fritz Bluthenbaum (who had commenced suffering a most portentous growth of beard to sprout out from his chin, with the view of giving himself importance in the eyes of the Orientals among whom he was shortly to re-appear), Mr. O'Driscoll, whose discharge Harry had purchased, divers carpet bags, and some fruit, which were speedily taken on board, and as the boat pushed off, Lord de Creci laconically addressed the skipper:

"All ready?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"Is she hove short?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"Make sail,"—and the bustle of getting under way instantly began. The women made their hasty adieus and bundled into the boat, which forthwith shoved off and lay on its oars a few yards distant, to take its last look of the *Arab*, the men ran to their various stations, the dog jumped up in the skipper's face, and was very nearly knocked overboard in return for its attention; the windlass was manned, and at the word "heave away" slowly revolved, the anchor rose to the bows, and as it was capped and fished, up ran the jib, and the vessel paid off till once more her head came round to the southward, the topsails were sheeted home, the peak rose slowly, the mainsail flapped heavily for a moment, then filled with a force that threatened to carry away the sheets, and away spun the *Arab* at the rate of nine knots an hour.

The picturesque ruins of Netley Abbey and the dreary lonely walls of Calshot soon lay behind them, and she speedily had the castle of Cowes on her larboard bow, the Clubhouse with its flag-staff, and its well constructed shed in front, the little harbour of the Medina, and the ivy clad towers of Norris Castle. In the tide lay a couple of American ships waiting for orders, and further in, the fairy fleet of the Royal Yacht Squadron lay buoyantly on their own waters, models of nautical architecture, upon the lines of whose hulls, and proportion and symmetry of whose spars, the skill of the builder has been lavished without regard to expense or trouble. Very pretty things they are, those yachts, and

moreover very significant, The days of the sea kings, the dragons of the waves are over, the chiefs of the north are no longer pirates, but the spirit of the sea, still remains among the descendants of the Northmen, and it is no slight indication of the mind of the nation, when its idle class, who in other countries live in sloth or hang about courts, and find their amusement in intrigues and billiards, the nobles and gentry of the land, choose for their playmates the winds and the waves. The like is not to be seen elsewhere, and it was a wise and royal recognition of the manly character of a high spirited institution, honourable alike to the Sailor King who gave it and the hardy gentlemen that received it, that bestowed on the Yacht Squadron the privileges of the great arm of the national defence, and placed it on a footing with the Royal Navy.

They are playful creatures too, those fairies of the Solent, for as the *Arab*, which was known to be going foreign, glided by with every stitell of canvass she could set, studding sails and all, the most westerly vessel, the property of a well known character, ran up a signal at the fore, which at first produced some little perplexity on board the *Arab* its purport not being exactly understood. Upon further search, it number was found. It appeared to be the considerate question—

“DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW YOU’RE OUT?”

Civility requiring an answer, the signal was made to

“FLARE UP;”—

which was considered advice entirely thrown away upon the noble owner of the anchored vessel, and having thus duly exchanged adieu with her colleagues, the *Arab* stood on on her course, soon run the Needles, and by eight o’clock she was standing out to sea, with the coast of England rapidly melting away in the twilight on her starboard quarter.

Lord de Creci and Henry paced the deck in silence, each wrapped in his own reflections, one on the past, the other on the future, both gloomy, for hope had little to say to either. Our hero’s thoughts ran naturally enough upon Clara Hastings, and the singular obstinacy with which she adhered to her refusal of him, an obstinacy which was now to him more unaccountable than ever. It certainly had more than once occurred to him that so long as she remained with her mother, a reluctance to leave her alone in the wide world might be a consideration powerful enough to prevent her marrying him or anybody else. This he understood perfectly, though had the question ever been raised, he would have at once disposed of it, by proposing that she should live with them, and he felt that limited as their means would have been Falconscrag was yet a better home than a confined lodging in a country village, still, now the separation had taken place, and not only that but she herself was in a position which to a fiery and haughty young man seemed one of most unbearable dependence. Well as he knew the truthfulness and straightforwardness of her character, he hardly credited the full importance that she attached to the objection on the score of religion. The unhappy indifference of his father in such matters had descended to the child, he did not very clearly understand another setting such value upon a subject which was of little importance in his eyes, and whilst he half suspected that some other

motive lurked in her mind, he expected little from the promise she had made him when they met in the churchyard at Ellesmere, for he did not expect ever to find himself warranted in claiming its performance. He could have toiled as a slave at her command; his own life or any one else's would have been trifles light as air in his eyes compared to her wishes, but to bend his pride of intellect before her, to confess that he had followed a delusive shadow when she had pointed out the truth, was more than his haughty spirit could endure. He could have said, "I have sinned," but to say, "I have been mistaken," would have wrung his very heart. However it was of little use thinking, the *Arab* was likely to save him that trouble, for she was carrying him away from the scene of his hopes and disappointments, as fast as canvass could move her hull through the water, and sometimes he indulged in the idea that it was possible that the change of scene and bustle of travel in the historical Land of the Morning might banish her from his thoughts.

As for Lord de Creci, having scanned the spars and tackle of the vessel with a rapid but searching glance, he had fallen into a state of gloomy abstraction, which his crew had observed always took possession of him when first he went to sea, as if the sea suggested some depressing recollection to his mind, a state of melancholy which, however, soon wore off. Whatever his thoughts were, they had no reference to his companion, for whom he felt no sympathy, for the plain reason that he did not know what was the matter with him. He knew nothing about Henry's affection for Clara, indeed he hardly was aware that our hero was even acquainted with that young lady, whom he himself had never seen; for it will be remembered that at the fire of Avonmore he had gone round to the stables the moment before her appearance at the window, and during the stay of the ladies at Mr. Fitzgerald's, he had not paid them a visit there, entertaining a most holy abhorrence of that gentleman, in which Lord William fully shared, notwithstanding the political support he received from him. During the few days that he had recently spent at Ellesmere he had not met her; he knew that Lady Emily had a new governess, with whom everybody, and especially Lady Madelaine, was very much pleased, and troubled his head no more about the matter. He certainly had observed a depression in Henry's manner, which after a moment's consideration, he set down as the effect of the disappointment of finding his profession suited him so little, and probably also doubt as to whether doing nothing would suit him better, and judging that the excitement of new scenes and new lands would soon dissipate his melancholy, he thought no more about the subject, and returned to his own gloomy meditations. His thoughts were of the past, of hopes crushed, of long days of captivity, of the wearing saddening of fruitless longing, of the dead whose image rose before his eyes from the sea, as one whom the sea alone, at its appointed time, could give up.

Their voyage across the Bay of Biscay was marked by nothing worthy of note, unless tolerably fine weather be considered so, Lord de Creci's original intention of putting in at Lisbon, having been overruled by the information he had received, that a revolution was to take place about that time in that capital, which was attempted accordingly soon after, though as it turned out without success.

The means seemed to have been inadequate to the end, for it appeared that on the morning of the 21st of August, one captain, twelve subalterns, a drum, a trombone, and seventy-eight rank and file of some regiment or other, undertook to change the succession to the throne of Portugal, subvert the monarchy, send the constitution to everlasting smash, and reconstruct it upon a basis hereafter to be agreed upon, which they proposed to effect by shouting out "Viva Don Pedro," murdering their colonel, and turning all the prisoners loose. Immediately upon their sallying forth from their barracks, a stock-jobber, a broken down guager, and a doctor, proclaimed themselves the Provisional Government, and soon after breakfast declared their sittings permanent, and enjoined the people to pay no more taxes to the Government of Don Miguel, an injunction falling in with their preconceived notions on the subject, which the people obeyed most religiously, and catholically; never was the world of Portugal so free from the pangs of payment, which we all know are the most universal and indiscriminating pangs of all the ills that flesh is heir to, for they hit the poor hard and the rich harder, and glad men were the Lusitanians to get rid of them, and earnestly did they support the new order of things, for during the existence of the Provisional Government, they neither paid taxes nor any other obligation or debt of any sort or kind whatever.

However, even this claim on the gratitude of the people was insufficient to ensure success, about a hundred and twenty men of some other regiment, with seven colonels, twelve majors, an amazing crowd of captains and subalterns, and an incredible number of wind instruments, together with six or seven English sailors, stood firmly by the constitution; that is to say, as soon as they had got their dinners, an extra encouragement of three onions and three spices of garlic having been served out to each fighting man, they marched out of their barracks, and meeting the insurgents, formed line to the front in remarkably handsome style, and opened a fire by files from the right of companies, which they maintained with great gallantry and perseverance for three hours and a half, nothing doubting from the deafening uproar that was going on, that the others were returning it, and rather congratulating themselves upon the insurgents making such bad practice, for they could not help observing that their own casualties were any thing but serious.

At the end of that time, however, a messenger came from the palace, to say, that they might as well cease firing, since upwards of three hours ago they had gained the victory, and immortalised themselves in the eyes of all Europe, or rather all Christendom, and the north coast of Africa, and it then appeared that by the time that their fire had run down the line, it had effected a counter revolution, for the insurgents had taken advantage of the smoke that covered them to escape in all directions, and in the course of the day, all the bill stickers in Lisbon were employed placarding all the dead walls, that public order was restored in the capital, which caused great rejoicings, as was no wonder. Indeed, some were inclined to attribute the suppression of the insurrection, to a direct interposition of Pro-

vidence, in which view they were confirmed by the curious fact that afterwards came out, that most of the heroes of that day, in their hurry to annihilate the rebels, had inadvertently been supplied with blank cartridges; about three hundred lives were lost nevertheless, which, as rather exceeding the number actually engaged, seems at first sight strange, but it arose from the practice at that time, that whenever an insurrection occurred every one took the opportunity of shooting any one that he entertained a grudge against or owed money to, or had any other good reason for shooting; commonly, when order was restored, claiming some decoration or pecuniary reward from the party that came off victorious, for having prevented a 'suspected' person injuring the cause. However, nobody cared much about that, the king eat his dinner in peace, and a liberal distribution of orders of knighthood to the preservers of the monarchy, wind instruments and all, as well as to the fathers, grandfathers, brothers, uncles, and cousins, of those that had any friends, was considered rather to have strengthened the hands of government. The event, however, was thought otherwise of on Change in London, for though the Consol market was sustained, it was sensibly felt in the foreign funds, and brought on a crisis in the Peninsular securities, as they are humorously called, that led to a depreciation in their price of not less than 10 per cent., that is to say, that being before at fifteen pence in the pound of their nominal value, they declined to thirteen pence half-penny, and have hardly recovered to this day. This unexpected fall touched up the Spanish bulls amazingly, and led to the suspension of (promises of) payment of several capitalists, viz. three half pay officers, a speculating clergyman, and a sporting tobacconist, which latter failure necessitated a forced sale of tobacco, segars, and their component parts, treacle and so forth, as sensibly affected the markets in Jamaica, and is felt in the Havannah even now.

Such at least was the history of the events of that day, told Lord de Creci by a French consul some time afterwards, and received by his Lordship with the somewhat irreverent observation, that he really did not care much whether the hog beat the dog, or the dog beat the hog; a most audacious, and, indeed, highly disrespectful remark to make with respect to the family quarrels of our most antient and faithful ally, though it passed for a very smart saying in the Levant, and was much applauded when repeated in a coffee-house at Acre, by an assemblage of Turks, who, holding all Giaours as unclean animals, included his Lordship and his whole nation, as well as the rest of Europe, in it.

They had now been nine days at sea, and the approach of midnight found Lord de Creci and Henry leaning silently over the star-board bulwarks. During the whole of that day the Earl had appeared oppressed by some indescribable feeling, of whose origin Henry was of course ignorant. He had hardly spoken since the morning, but kept his eye anxiously fixed upon the shore, sometimes apparently recognising some particular headland or landmark, until near midnight.

The Arab was now entering a spacious bay, the sea was calm and tranquil, the moonlight slumbered upon the silvery waters, and the silence was only broken by the occasional flapping of a sail, for the

wind was so light as hardly to fill them. Onwards she glided, and something like a pyramid of white marble seemed marked against the side of the dark hill before them.

"In the course of your service," asked Lord de Creci, "did it ever happen to you to be made prisoner?"

"No," was the answer, and the Earl relapsed into the gloomy silence he had preserved all day. As they neared the shore, lights and shadows began to appear in the white object before them. The different buildings that composed it seemed to disentangle themselves from one another, palaces, minarets, bazaars, mosques, houses, took forms of their own, and stood boldly out from the broad pale spectral mass of the slumbering city, which looked a pile of snow-white terraces, rising irregularly flight upon flight, in a pyramidal form from the sea, to a fortress that sat like a mural crown upon its apex, or like cyclopæan steps, by which giants might mount to the foot of the Atlas, that soared against the midnight sky far away to the right, raising its ghastly jagged summits above the region where the frost is king, and the snow melts not before the sun.

A towering light-house stood up from an island in front of the town, thickly covered with stately buildings, and connected with the shore by a magnificent sea wall, and, excepting a few lanterns glimmering faintly in two or three lofty minarets, giving them the appearance of huge smouldering torches, ready to light the coming giants up the colossal steps, there was hardly a light to be seen, and scarcely a sound stole across the silent waters. All was repose; but it was an armed slumber, and, as they approached the shore, Henry smiled with the instinct of a soldier, for he well knew what the swarm of little semicircular openings portended, that seemed like the eyes of the buildings that lined the shore, and he saw that the thunder of war slept in those voiceless walls. His mind, too, rose rapidly over the struggle of which those regions had lately been the scene, and which in fact finally and conclusively lock-jawed piracy in the Mediterranean, and was considering in his mind what results might be expected from it, for at that time the character of the struggle had not developed itself, when his attention was attracted by a discussion on the subject that was going on between his own servant and Bluthenbaum. The former worthy was desirous of informing his mind on the subjects of the recent operations in that quarter. It may be well supposed that the exploits of a French army could not be a very distasteful subject to an old member of that extensive and somewhat excursive body, like Bluthenbaum, so he dwelt with infinite satisfaction on the great intrusion question of that time.

"Arrah, how did they get in at all, at all," asked O'Driscoll, who had a loose idea that twelve or fifteen hundred pieces of cannon have a curious property of enforcing a notice of 'no admittance except on business,' over the gates of a fortress; "sure the devil himself wouldn't live under them batteries, there's enough guns there to blow Ould Nick out of the water, if ever he had the good luck to get there, the ould sinner; there isn't a place that I can see where you could land a water spaniel."

"They did not attack by water," said Bluthenbaum ; "they debarked to the westward, and took the place in reverse."

"Took the place in reverse," repeated the Hibernian ; "what is that ? Did they take it in light marching order, or may be in their shell jackets."

"They fought their road from Sidi el Feruch," replied Bluthenbaum ; "and when they were established in the rear of the town, they carried the Spitze, you call the top of the hill there, and then their artillery balayed the talus down to the sea."

"They carried the spits up all the top of the hill," repeated O'Driscoll, with a somewhat puzzled air, for he did not altogether like to confess himself ignorant of any part, however abstruse of the art of war, and did not precisely understand this peculiar branch ; "they carried the spits up all the top of the hill, then the artillery bullied the tailors down to the say,—that's roastin a goose in Frinch ; but how they took the place by that, barrin that the Lord Mayor was a tailor, I don't know. That bates cockfighting. Well, tell us, Mr. Bloodanowns, if you please—"

"I do not please," returned the other impatiently, "to be called by false names. My name is Bluthenbaum, tausand sacrament ; why call you me not so ?"

"Sure I'd do anything to please you, sir," returned the other ; "I'll call you Bloodybones with all the pleasure in life."

"No, not Bloodybones," said the Frenchman impatiently, "Bluthenbaum—Blue."

"Blue," repeated O'Driscoll.

"Ten," continued the other.

"Ten, twenty if you like, Blue tin, Block tin."

"Nein, nein," returned Bluthenbaum, "Bluten."

"Bludden," answered the Irishman ; "arrah, listen to rason, man—alive, how am I, that was born and bred in the Upper Ormonds, to spake your jaw-breaking Frinch names, without you let me put it into English, Bludden—"

"Bluthenbaum," returned the other, who now began to hope that an annoyance that he had become rather impatient of, for all men are ticklish about their names, good, bad, or indifferent, was in a fair way of being removed.

"It's no use," said O'Driscoll, shaking his head in despair ; "it would be as asy for me to talk Haybrew, as that gibberish. I'll call you Fritz, if you please, it's an easy dacent name."

"Sois good," returned Fritz ; and vocal harmony was restored between the two. "Ah," said Bluthenbaum to himself, "C'est une colonie superbe ! quel honneur a la France ! il y a deja quatre restaurants, un Theatre, même l'opera, un mont de piete et plusieurs hopitaux des fous." Some ill-disposed persons go the length of asserting that there is in that promising colony but one hospital des fous, whose premises are continous with the limits of its territory ; but that is a narrow insular view of the cage, the safety valves of Europe are in the valleys of the Atlas and the Caucasus, and if the spare steam were not blown off there, the machine would tear itself to pieces.

Abdel Kader, in the pantomime of the nineteenth century, enacts the part of Pantaloon, and receives with a good grace, and an occasionally by no means bad style of effort at returning them, the blows the Harlequin Crapaud, intends for Clown Bull; though of late he has turned his attention to the Columbine of the South Seas—the Queen of Tahiti.

Still the vessel swept on, Lord de Creci's eyes traversed the city in every direction, as if recognising house after house; the ripple of the waves upon the beach became audible, the challenge of a French sentry might be heard occasionally, a guard boat was manned, and lay on their oars, as if to examine the stranger, but much to Harry's astonishment, just as he imagined they were about to run into the harbour; he turned to the mate in charge of the watch, and telling him to go about, in another minute the Arab was standing out to sea.

"Lie to when you get a couple of leagues out," said he to the mate, "we'll take another look at the place in the morning. What a quiet reigns there," continued he, addressing Harry; "there is what one might imagine a holy calm about it, if one did not know what lurked beneath,—a city of tombs could not be more silent, or more still."

"It is a wolf in sheep's clothing, nevertheless," returned Harry; for though he had never visited the last stronghold of piracy before, he had no difficulty in the triangular form of the walls, and the bristling batteries of the mole, in recognising Algiers.

"Yes," said Lord de Creci, "for many years dark deeds were done within those walls that disgraced the Europe that suffered them, quite as much as the barbarians that committed them." He took a turn on the deck, and then returning, looked once more towards the city that seemed to be receding and melting into the darkness.

"Fifteen years ago," said he, solemnly, "this very night, this very hour, I lay down to catch what sleep my dungeon, swarming with vermin, would allow me, within those walls, a chained and hopeless captive."

Henry started, he knew that his companion had encountered strange scenes, but he never thought they had gone so far as this; but the Earl seemed disinclined to gratify the curiosity his observation had excited.

"You must have patience till to-morrow," said he; "you shall hear the history of my captivity at day-break."

CHAPTER XXVI.

IT was long before sleep visited the eyes of our hero that night. The remarkable communication Lord de Creci had made to him, kept his mind in a state of restlessness, that even the gurgling of the water by his berth, could not vanquish; and he lay wondering at what appeared to his eyes a sort of prodigy,—a British slave within four days' sail of Gibraltar, and five of Malta. Histories of captivity of Christians among Moors were of course familiar to him. So, also, were the stories of Robinson Crusoe, and the Arabian Nights, and the sorely-pursued Baron Munchausen, and the much-astonished Lemuel Gulliver; and he as much expected those chronicles to re-produce themselves as cotemporary events, as to find himself in the company of one who had actually tasted the bitterness of the bread of slavery; it seemed like the incident of a past age, arising from its repose of centuries, as if the Earl alleged that he was the Fitzwarine who slew the Saxon at Hastings, or succoured the Prince at Creci. He had often longed to raise the veil which the Earl chose should hang over his past life, which had evidently been of an adventurous character, unusual in modern times, and, indeed, with the present rapidity and universality of communication, in the present time, almost impossible. A little reflection, however, convinced him that, in the times referred to, the motions or misfortunes of an individual might totally escape notice: mighty nations were struggling for existence: great principles were being enounced, but in language that men understood not yet—some said in language that did not describe them: high hearts were failing for the high hopes that were disappointed: true hearts were breaking for the dead that returned no more from the battle field,—all was absorbing. The very babble of the idlers was a gigantic babble; the news of the day was a victory gained, or an army destroyed: men's gossip was of the downfall of old kingdoms, and the establishment of new systems; their ears were stunned by the trumpet of fame and the roar of battle, not unmingled with dying groans and widows' wailings, the war spirit came riding over the sea and the land on the wings of the winds, and the rustling of his iron pinions was a sound of might,—a commanding sound that no man listened to unmoved,—the world's foundations trembled: great events were passing, like giant phantoms across the troubled scene, none knew what might come next, and individuals might come and go, suffer or die, unobserved.

In the grey of the morning he awoke, and went upon deck. Lord de Creci was already there walking moodily up and down. Though they could not be much above a mile from the shore, nothing was visible, for a haze yet lingered on the waters, and that prevented their seeing above a couple of hundred yards in any direction. When he reached the deck Lord de Creci looked at Harry for a moment, hardly returned his salute, and instantly commenced his narrative, as if he had

kept it pent up in his bosom so long that it became unsupportable, and he felt himself compelled at last to unburden himself of his secret,—

“I was returning home from——” here he checked himself for a moment, and then went on, “from Egypt, at least I was taking a passage to Gibraltar in a Spanish vessel; when just off the coast of Africa, between Oran and Algiers, it came on to blow furiously, and the Spanish sailors, at a time that every hand on board was wanted to work, betook themselves to their prayers, according to the custom of their nation. The helmsman abandoned the helm, which I immediately took, and found that I required the assistance of another man to work it properly, which assistance, a negro whom they had shipped as cook at Alexandria, alone, of the whole crew, would render me. Still not a soul would attend to the sails; the night was dark; the man that ought to have kept the look-out was bidding whole stores of wax candles for his life; there was not a single Englishman on board but myself, but I thought I might possibly rouse a German passenger to give some help in working the vessel, and descended into the cabin for that purpose; hardly had I entered it when a sudden shock, that nearly threw me down and was answered with a howl of horror from every part of the vessel, brought me on deck again. I found that, in the darkness and drift, we had ran foul of another vessel, and the rigging having got entangled the two hulls were striking one another with a violence that threatened to send both to the bottom. To cut away the rigging and clear the ship was now the only thing to be done, but the Spaniards preferred calling on their saints; so seizing a tomahawk, I went aloft and with the assistance of the negro I spoke of, succeeded at last in disentangling the vessels, and they parted. Just, however, as I was descending I suddenly felt both eyes blaze up with light,—a violent blow on the head, and I recollect nothing more, until coming to my senses I found that I had been struck overboard by the main-yard of the strange vessel, and to my horror discovered that she had picked me up, and that my own was now nearly two miles distant. The sailors of the French brig, for such I found the vessel to be to which I had been thus unexpectedly transferred, were kind enough, and endeavoured to console me by assuring me that I was much better on board of her than I should have been on board my own vessel, for that she had already lost her mizen, was evidently seriously damaged, and would, in all probability, not live through the night;”—here a strong emotion choked the Earl’s utterance, and he walked twice backwards and forwards before he resumed his narrative:—“our own situation, however, now demanded our utmost exertions, we knew that we could not be far from the coast of Africa, the wind had come round more and more to the northward, and in short about day break we struck. Were you ever shipwrecked?”

“No,” replied Harry, who was getting more and more interested in the recital of his companion’s misadventure,—“well, what happened?”

“You may imagine,” continued the Earl, “even though you never have witnessed them, the horrors that attend such scenes, the frenzied exertions, the madness of despair, the frightful calmness with which brave men met their ends—and what I thought perhaps more horrible

yet, the idiotcy which made its appearance among some of that doomed crew, when the immediate presence of death brought on the hideous paralysis of the mind, that arises from uncontrolled and uncontrollable terror. For nearly three hours the struggle for existence went on, each as the wreck went to pieces endeavouring to make for the shore upon what fragments he could lay his hands on ; and I should imagine that about half the crew succeeded in reaching the land, the rest perished in the waves. I think there must have been about thirty of us collected, but, before we had time even to look our situation fairly in the face, we found ourselves surrounded by the Arabs. We were, as you may suppose, instantly plundered and stripped, resistance was out of the question, for exhausted and unarmed as we were, they outnumbered us by three to one ; and this circumstance, raising a difficulty as to the distribution of their prizes, caused a dispute among themselves that led to a massacre of all the captives except me alone, and three of the crew who had succeeded in secreting themselves whilst the butchery was going on. It seemed to me that I owed my preservation to the circumstance of the savages admitting that an old man, to whom they evidently deferred, had a right as chief to some portion of the spoil, and that he selected me on the grounds that I was at least three inches taller than any of the crew ; but however that may be, the rest were butchered, and I was sent up the country immediately, with the three who escaped. Where we were going to I had not the remotest conception, nor indeed have I a very clear idea to this day, as to the exact locality of my prison. I know that we marched in a southerly direction for eight nights, for my guards seemed apprehensive of travelling in the day time, probably lest they in their turn might be plundered ; a little bread and water, barely enough to keep life in us, was all that was allowed us ; and my companions, all of whom were either bruised in landing or wounded afterwards, sunk under these hardships, which were exceedingly aggravated by the sufferings we endured by the laceration of our feet, for they had robbed us of our shoes and stockings, and one after the other they died. On the ninth day I arrived at the place that was to be the scene of a fifteen months' captivity. It was the fortress of a Kabyle chieftain, and in it I found a regular slave establishment, containing an enormous number of slaves, each two of whom were bound together, by an iron chain about ten feet long, which could not have weighed less than half a hundred weight. This was fastened to a ring on the ankle and rivetted, and was never taken off. To give you a detailed account of the horrors I witnessed here would be inflicting needless pain upon both you and me ; but I may observe that the leading object in the mind of our masters seemed to be less that of deriving profit from our labour, than pleasure from that peculiar Mahomedan enjoyment, the luxury of ill using and tormenting Christians. The only vessels we had for drinking out of, were the skulls of our predecessors, whose bodies had been thrown out just outside the prison, that we might be eye-witnesses to their being torn to pieces by wild beasts ; notwithstanding that this inhuman practice was the source of enormous loss

to our master by attracting swarms of wolves, bears, lions, panthers, and hyenas, who did incalculable damage to the chief's flocks. Disabling wounds were inflicted with utter recklessness; a little more care would have enabled the keepers to get twice as much work out of the unfortunate wretches, a little more food would have repaid itself ten-fold,—but no, all considerations of self-interest vanished before the hatred of the Christian; and nothing shews their feelings more strongly than my case, for I of course offered to pay an enormous ransom as soon as I found a man who could interpret, but all in vain. 'Stay and die, Christian dog,' was the answer, nor could I ever find means of communicating my situation to any European or friendly native who could assist me. In fact, I might have remained there until this day if it had not been for an accident that I never foresaw, and had no control over. A French renegade named Manet, had become a favourite with the sheikh from being able to make himself useful to him, principally, I believe, in the manufacture of gunpowder; and though not suffered to leave the castle unattended by one of the sheikh's men, enjoyed a considerable degree of liberty, which fortunately for us, he turned to a purpose characteristic of his country, for he was one day detected peeping in at the windows of the sheikh's harem. This is an unpardonable offence among them; but, luckily for the Frenchman, the sheikh had then more than ever need of his services, for he meditated an expedition on a larger scale than he had ever attempted before, and accordingly, instead of putting him to death on the spot, he contented himself with ordering an infliction of the bastinado, that just left the life in him and little more. The man recovered, but revenge was now the sole thought that occupied his mind; the fabrication of powder went on till an enormous quantity was made, and then in a,—for himself,—unfortunate fit of confidence, the sheikh communicated to Manet that it was intended for an attack upon Algiers, as he contemplated making himself master of the whole country; the next day Manet had vanished, as he had left his horse behind him, it was concluded that he had fallen a prey to wild beasts, and no farther notice was taken of the circumstance; but it seems that he made his way safe to Titre, where notice of the sheikh's intended attack was forwarded to Algiers. The Dey, thus warned, took the initiative, and in an action that soon afterwards followed, two of the sheikh's sons were taken prisoners and immediately afterwards ordered to be beheaded. At the moment that the sentence was about to be carried into execution one of them offered four hundred Christian slaves for their lives, which was accepted, and among that number I was sent to Algiers. I was confined in that tower, which you may distinguish by its being just behind that flag. I suppose it is used as a prison now, for I see a double sentry."

"I see it," said Harry, making out, with no little interest, the prison in which the Earl had been confined.

"There," continued he, "I remained some time. I was employed working at the arsenal, and vainly endeavoured to communicate with any one; but one day, as I was working as usual, a British boat's crew passed within a very few yards. I had not observed them, but

I heard an Arab say to another, that the mother of wonders was to see a midshipman blush, and upon looking up, I recognised in the midshipmen, the wife and sister of a gentleman whom I had known elsewhere, and who, as I afterwards learned, though I was not aware of it at the time, was then the British consul at Algiers; and from their finding it necessary to escape in this disguise, as well as the activity displayed in repairing and arming the fortifications, I conjectured that some crisis was at hand, and soon afterwards, in an unsuccessful attempt to communicate with the British consul, I learned that he was in irons. In a few days more, I saw fifteen hundred Christian slaves marched up to a cavern on the top of the mountain, near the Emperor's Fort, where they were confined. How I came to be forgotten I do not very well know, but at nightfall I was locked up and chained as usual. I had been hard worked; I was tired, I was hungry, and yet I felt a sort of cheerfulness, that I had not experienced before since my arrival in Africa. It seemed as if a heavy black damp veil had been lying on my spirit for many months, and now a friendly hand was raising it.

The day broke much like this very day, just before sunrise I had looked out of the loophole of my prison, but a haze was spread, just as it is now, over the sea, and I could see nothing but a wide expanse of grey mist, which, however, was beginning slowly to curl upwards before the rising sun. I lay down once more, wondering that my master did not come to summon me to my daily task, and fell into a sort of doze, in which mingled light morning dreams, such as doubly embitter the prisoner's waking,—I dreamed of home, of the childhood whence I had not then very long emerged, of green fields and cooling showers, of my old haunts, the lordly stillness of Ellesmere, of the clamorous welcome that ever awaited me from the wild but hearty tenants at Avonmore, and then a sound of a multitude, mixed with my dream, and I fancied that the assembled tenantry were escorting me in triumph to the house,—the noise grew stronger and stronger till it broke my slumbers, and I became aware of its reality, for the trampling of thousands announced that a strong body of troops were marching into Algiers. Once again I roused myself, and my astonishment increased, for it was now broad daylight, and it never once had occurred to me before to be allowed to rest until the sun had risen,—once more I looked from the narrow window; and never shall I forget the sight that met my view. The mist was gone, the curtain was raised from the face of the waters; and far and wide, as far as the eye could reach,—the sea was alive with the ensigns of Britain.

Within ten miles of my prison their stately line of battle swept silently towards the shore. All this I could see distinctly, I could see the colours, I could see that they were ships of war, I could see the three-decker leading with the flag, and from the strength of the expedition, it was evident that that sun would look upon no child's play; but I could not at first actually impress upon my mind that that squadron was come to deliver me and a thousand others from slavery,—that, in all probability, that very day was the last of our captivity,—all this I slowly, and by degrees, comprehended, and with

it came some doubt of the result, when I looked at the preparations that were made in the town. However, I soon reflected upon the uniformity of result that has hitherto attended the appearance of a British fleet, and took my post at the loop-hole to watch its motions. For some time the fleet hardly changed its position, there was little or no wind, but towards noon a breeze sprung up, the fleet stood slowly in, and could not have been very much more than a mile from the town when they lay to, and I heard the first Christian sound I had heard for many months. It was simple enough in itself, for it was merely the ships piping to dinner; there was little romance or even dignity in it; under other circumstances you might hear it a hundred times, and merely say it is twelve o'clock: perhaps the humble and familiar character of the sound gave more of reality to the squadron than I had at first been able to invest it with; its very homeliness carried to my breast a stronger conviction that the whole scene before my eyes was not a mere phantasmagoria of the imagination, an ocean mirage, or dream more delusive than usual—I then knew that I was really awake; and I felt a deeper emotion than I had hitherto experienced when I thought of the sounds that were to follow,—the voice of a mighty empire, issuing her mandates in accents of thunder from the decks of her war ships.

For a space of time this seeming inaction lasted, and then a boat, which I observed come in with a flag of truce from the flag-ship, hoisted a signal and pulled out towards the fleet, and the preparations for the stern debate that was at hand recommenced. I could distinguish some activity on the poop of the three-decker; I saw the men take hold of the signal halyards,—up went the three balls to the mast-head, and as they touched the truck, unfurled themselves; the signals streamed for a moment on the breeze over the mountain of canvass; were repeated; answered; and hauled down; the head of the ships turned heavily to the southward; the drums beat to quarters, and under top-sails and top-gallant sails, with boats in tow, crews at quarters, yards in slings, tompions out, guns loaded, and every preparation for instant action, the British fleet stood into Algiers.

The people in the town had not been idle, the batteries were manned, the gun-boats placed in the most favourable positions; and I think it was about three o'clock in the day that the British flag-ship,—every man where he ought to be, in dead silence, the officers at their posts, the captains of guns, lanyard in hand, looking earnestly aft for the word fire,—ran across the whole line of batteries, within a hundred yards of them, without receiving or firing one single shot, till she brought up within eighty yards of the south end of the mole; and the whole of the rest of the fleet, some of whom I now observed to be Dutch, took up their stations with the same warlike precision;—all this time, the Arabs seemed paralysed,—the cool, silent intrepidity with which ship after ship placed herself, under the fire of batteries they had been taught to consider impregnable, appeared to stupify them,—they could not understand it; and, though they had been preparing for weeks, they had absolutely forgotten to load their guns when the Queen Charlotte swept by them, and I could see them busily loading them

as the other ships were coming into line. It was a strange sight I looked on, and one that men do not see often in their lives ; and I must admit that I felt my flesh creep when I reflected on what a few moments more must necessarily bring ; so close were the ships that I could literally distinguish every officer on the deck of the *Queen Charlotte*, and it was quite evident that the next word from the lips of the admiral would be echoed by her broadside ; but still the batteries were crowded with people, not with fighting men, for with the true Oriental fatalism of the Arabs, three-fourths of them were spectators. I saw the Admiral repeatedly wave his hat to them to get out of the way, but they paid no attention to his warning, and at last, a little before three, a solitary puff of smoke glanced lightly, almost gaily, like a laughing devil, from the eastern battery, and opened the battle.

The Admiral could only have seen the flash and smoke of the gun, for there was not time for the sound to have reached him, when I observed him change his position, and apparently say something to the man next him ; it was a word of might that old man spoke so coolly, a terrible word, its import was not long doubtful—not one second. A flashing of fire burst from the side of the three-decker, huge volumes of smoke that carried men's lives upon them, broke from the mouths of the guns, rolled for a moment fiercely along the surface of the water, and then curled heavily upwards, a deafening roar of thunder shook the air, and as the fire ran along the line, like a series of volcanic outbreaks, the batteries opened with one accord,—and the sights and sounds of war alone reigned in Algiers. There were none other.

For hours this terrible contest lasted, and it would take me hours, ay, days, to narrate the horrors that those doomed walls contained ;—every possible variety of human misery—wounds, mutilation and death, passed under my eyes, and still the fury of the fight seemed unabated—and the sun went down upon the raging battle ; but light was not wanting, for the shipping in the port was on fire. One of them drifting out, approached the *Queen Charlotte* so closely that I was convinced that nothing could save her from being burnt with the Algerine ; her launch, however, took the destructive vessel in tow, and succeeded in averting the danger, she passed along to the leeward like a huge column of flame, moving slowly and majestically along the face of the water ; and by her blaze I could clearly see that, though the British squadron was standing out to sea to repair damages—nevertheless, its task was done, the Algerines were manifestly defeated. The scene could not be repeated on the morrow, too many of the actors lay stiff and stark at the posts they would not abandon ; and, accordingly, on the morrow I was a free man."

" Well," said Harry, " that is a strange adventure in the life of an English nobleman. I always had imagined that it was one of the peculiarities of the bombardment of Algiers, that it did not release a single English slave—prisoner I mean—though it was done by the English for the simple reason that the Dey had no Englishmen to release."

"That account was so far correct," returned the Earl, "for I had reasons for concealing both my name and nation at the time, and, indeed, for some months afterwards."

"Did any of the shot fall near you?" asked Harry.

"No," replied the Earl, "the guns were laid very low. I often afterwards wondered at the coolness I felt at the time, for certainly it is not pleasant being under the fire of a British fleet; but I thought of nothing but their success, my own personal danger had no weight with me."

"No," remarked Harry, the recollections of many a smartish affair in India returning to his mind, "it never has. The moment the balls begin to whistle you lose all thought of yourself. Winning or losing is all that you think of."

"That was my case," said Lord de Creci.

"Of course, you never heard any thing more of your baggage that was left on board the ship you sailed from Alexandria in?"

A dark shade passed over Lord de Creci's face at the question; he looked for a moment over the side, as if he would pierce the secrets of the deep and demand of the unanswering waves to render an account of the hosts they have engulfed. "No," said he, "the vessel was heard of no more; I caused inquiry to be made in every port in Europe; I scoured the Mediterranean myself, but there were no tidings of her—not a sailor could I find that had belonged to her; and I much fear she must have foundered in the night."

"Well," muttered Harry to himself, as he descended to breakfast, "I do not wonder that he looks grave, it's enough to steady a man for the rest of his life." Lord de Creci lingered on deck a few minutes, looking on the diminishing mass of the lately conquered city. 'Algiers, Algiers,' murmured he, 'how different it was when I last turned my back upon your walls—then all was hope, confident hope; now, darkness, hopelessness;—would to God that I were dead!' He turned round to his captain as he spoke, and instructing him to make all sail for Malta, descended. During the whole of that day Lord de Creci hardly spoke; he seemed to be much absorbed in his own meditations to think of any thing else, he failed even in his customary attention to the duties of hospitality, and he retired to rest, though probably not to sleep, that evening earlier than was his custom.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THERE is no doubt that there was a good deal of firing in the Bay of Algiers on the 27th of August 1816; and some people pretend that it was an expenditure of powder and shot, in which all Christendom was interested, yet it admits of a doubt whether so many Englishmen were personally interested in it, as in the much more important fire that was opened at daybreak on the first of September following on the partridges.

This is the great day in England, when the whole country, as if it had a geological small-pox, breaks out into little fiery places, before whose blaze even the ever-to-be-remembered fifth of November pales and gunpowder treason is forgot; indeed, it would be treason to associate the word treason with gunpowder then—it would be worse, it would be rank heresy to disparage the smutty divinity of the hour, for men absolutely worship gunpowder on the first of September. For some days preceding it, the country is in a double-barrelled fever, an incessant trying of locks produces a low ticking throughout every house, something like the sound that is heard in a clockmaker's shop; the men that make leather gaiters hold up their heads, and begin to think that they are at least as good as the breeches-makers; the dogs begin to look contemplatively at the almanac, as if they knew the day of the month as well as their masters, who eye the preserves, as Eve eyed the apple, very sanguinary glances are cast upon buck-wheat, reprieved as it is for a time, and the turnips tremble with a prescience of the deeds that are to be done among them.

It was amongst all this din of warlike preparation which gave Ellesmere the air of a conspirator's castle, in which an armed insurrection was being concocted, that Clara received a communication on whitey-brown paper, stating that if she would call at a certain cottage in the outskirts of the village, at seven o'clock the next evening, she would hear something to her advantage. When she received this she was sitting alone in her room at the open window, which looked over the deer park, and having perused it with some astonishment at any body having thought it worth while to write such a letter to her, she tore it into small pieces, and watched it enact the part of a miniature snow storm till it reached the ground. She thought no more of this, for some how or other, as the little twinkling scraps of paper whirled round and round as they descended, obeying with a sportive grace, in their most eccentric flutterings, the eternal laws that bind the universe in a chain that knows no limit of power, space, or time, they suggested to her mind the idea that, at that very moment, whilst she was looking out of her window in *terram firma* at Ellesmere, it might be blowing a gale of wind in the Mediterranean or the Bay of Biscay, which latter assemblage of waters she understood to be an exceedingly alarming

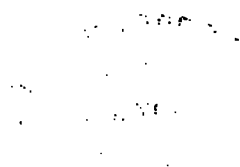
place—a sort of place where ships had no regular centre of gravity worth mentioning, but rested on their beam ends, or their stem or their stern, without reference to the keel, just as the fit took them, and dipped their yard-arms into the water, as if they were washing their hands like Christians. She then recollected a picture she had once seen, in which was depicted a vessel, apparently somewhat roughly handled by the wind and the waves—a reasonable quantity of her masts being absent without leave—the survivors of her sails having assumed the form of ribbands,—and a union jack reversed to shew that she was sensible of her condition (by way of drawing the attention to which, of any vessels that might happen to be passing that way, the flag streamed dead against the wind); this object was represented clambering up one of a species of green mountain, of an assemblage of which, much resembling the downs on the south coast of Sussex, the sea was supposed to be composed. At the bottom of the slope up which the vessel was mounting, as if by a ladder, were two seamen struggling in the water, one supporting himself by what appeared to be the mainmast of the vessel, though the ship had her's standing, the other swimming in an independent manner, with almost half his body out of water. As this terrible picture arose before her eyes, she thought once more of the Bay of Biscay, and without extending her regards to the Atlantic or Pacific, finally passed the Straits of Gibraltar in her reverie, and at last began to wonder—if—if—the Arab had encountered any such weather; that was a more interesting subject,—she did not clearly see that anybody was likely to tell her anything to her advantage—and so three or four days passed, and she forgot the letter and all its promises.

The first of September came, or, as one may say, broke out, and Lady Sarah having gravely requested Lord Chorley not to adventure his precious person among the implements of destruction, on the ground that he would probably either get in the way from ignorance and be shot himself, and what was infinitely more important, shoot somebody else in the alarm the birds rising about him would occasion, and received for answer that it would take a very considerable amount of cart ropes to keep him out of the field on that day, had just commenced a quarrel with him for it, when she changed her mind, and declared that she highly approved of his answer—that it shewed he had some character, an article that she never had given him credit for possessing before; and, in token of her approbation, promised, that when she was in the humour for it, she would net a purse for him in the event of such an article being of any use to him, which she did not suppose it was, and they became better friends than ever.

The day as we said broke out, the gentlemen were in the fields; a popping went on all day as if a smart affair of out-posts was in progress, and Clara once more received a letter of the same character as the former, but offering more direct temptation, it ran thus:—

“Hon^d. Miss,

“If you have anny reggard for the feelins of your Mother, or anny curosisy for the life and death of your late Feyther of blessed memory, you will without fale meat one hoo noas all about it, this nite at six





o'clock, at Mother Gubbin's cottage in the lane, as has Lilac Villa ridden on it; take notice, cum aloan or you will get nothink."

Clara did not tear up this note, she laid it down upon the table beside her, for on the subject of her father, she certainly had a great deal of curiosity. She had no recollection of him herself. Whatever the circumstances, time or place of his death might have been, it had taken place so far back as to leave no impression on her mind; upon that subject Mrs. Hastings had always observed silence, and, however desirous she herself might naturally have been to receive some information about her departed parent, she had always felt it a sacred duty not to intrude upon the grief of her widowed mother. For a long time she considered upon the propriety of holding intercourse with any one whatever in this clandestine manner. She felt it was not right, but still she was not very certain that it was very wrong; the person who could tell her something about her father, might after all not be a very terrible person: Lilac Villa was probably not a pest house, whatever the interview was, she had the power of terminating it whenever she pleased; and finally arguing that there could be no very great harm in it, she in an unfortunate hour resolved to comply with the invitation.

The evening set in cold and drizzly, and as poor Clara wrapped herself up in her cloak she blushed deeply at a feeling that at that moment rose in her mind, a sort of satisfaction at the opportunity of concealing her person that the unfavourable character of the weather afforded her, she felt that she was transgressing a rule that she had laid down for herself ever since her arrival at Ellesmere, viz. never herself to go beyond certain bounds beyond which she had been instructed not to take her young charge, and which extending to the boundaries of the park, itself very extensive, and some secluded wood-land behind it gave abundant room for all the exercise they required. Certainly this cottage was very little outside the park walls, but it was on the outskirts of the village, close to the high road, and the village, though small and unimportant itself, had an unenviable publicity from being the point where several great roads joined in one and was one incessant scene of changing horses, coach slang, and stable-yard facetiousness in consequence.

Clara had not gone very far from the house before she encountered a party of the shooters returning, among whom she recognized Sir Thomas Horton. She hurried by like a guilty thing, fancying that he might speak to her; but he did not, he fixed his eyes on her as she passed with the grim smile and peculiar expression of countenance that had so terrified her before in Somerton, and as she passed on, shuddering at the idea of an evil genius haunting her—which the presence of Sir Thomas always suggested to her mind,—a scornful laugh from the party, which she fancied was at her expense, and which she did not doubt was raised by some expression of his about her, once more brought the blood to her cheeks, though in this case indignation was blended with shame. She had no difficulty in finding the cottage she was in search of, a large flaring board inscribed Lilac Villa, distinguishing it from its neighbours, and a solitary and not very flourishing lilac tree offering its testimony to the correctness of the denomination. There was something in the

look of the cottage absolutely repulsive, the garden in front was not only neglected in point of order, but further disfigured by tawdry attempts at ornament ; broken scollop-shells separated the rank weeds in the beds from the stunted grass on the walk, an arbour without shade on one side, matched a bee-hive without bees on the other ; the cottage itself bore the same character of slovenly finery, the doors and windows were newly painted a flaring green, but the walls had not been white-washed for years, and were stained and mouldy ; so little tempting was the aspect of the place, that Clara paused for a moment, and had half resolved to go back, when the mistress of the cottage, observing her hesitation, opened the door and beckoned her to enter, and she almost mechanically obeyed the summons. The woman was a stout dame, portly and ruddy to an extent that some people would call bloated, she was untidy in her dress, which, though of good materials, was indifferently made, carelessly put on, and in some places slightly torn ; her eye was bold, yet not without some expression of cunning, and her manner forward, but neither uncivil nor disrespectful ; the furniture that met Clara's eye when she entered, gave her the impression that though there was sufficient for any purpose for which its inhabitants might require it, it was badly chosen, some of it was broken, the clock was not going, the crockery, instead of presenting the array it generally does in the orderly ranks which form the decoration that corresponds to pictures and statues in the abodes of the poor who are born with a natural perception of taste, was heaped and piled anywhere and everywhere ; a broken pane in the window was supplied by part of the back of an old book, and there was more smell of tobacco and spirits than there ought to have been ; but a flitch of bacon hung above, a heap of potatoes in a corner were not sightly, but were still eatable, some strings of onions appealed to more senses than one, and on the whole, it seemed that the life of the inmates of the cottage was one of plenty, though also probably of irregularity ; and Clara, after a moment's consideration, decided in her unsuspicious mind, that the poor woman was likely so unfortunate as to be the wife of a poacher, or perhaps even smuggler, and that she was very much to be pitied in consequence ; a conjecture not very far from the truth.

Mrs. Gubbins received her as if she had long expected her, and shewing her into a small room simply furnished in rather a better style than that which she had first entered, left her for a few moments, and then returned with a wizened little old woman, whose dusky hue, black sparkling eye, and air of wild cunning, at once proclaimed her to belong to the wandering race of the gypsies. Clara almost shuddered at the sight of the outcast, for without sharing in the vulgar fear of the supernatural power or foresight of these vagrants, or the propensity to carry off other people's children, so gravely and sensibly attributed to those who have barely the means of supporting their own, and that principally by petty theft, in short, without the fear of being either kidnapped or bewitched, she experienced a sort of creeping horror at the idea of that strange race that wander unchecked and irrepressible over the earth, no man knowing whence they came or how they live, without house or home, nation or religion ; roaming without

apparent object to guide them, and leaving no visible trace behind them, but still exhibiting marks of their Asiatic origin, and more than suspected of Asiatic perfidy and recklessness of morality, where anything is to be gained by either fraud, or (if need be,) violence. The old woman sat down in dead silence opposite Clara, and, for more than a minute, regarded her with a fixed and scrutinizing stare, as if she would read her inmost thoughts, and the poor girl was by no means sorry when this examination was over, and the gypsey at last broke the irksome silence.

"Blessings on your pretty face," said she, in the wheedling manner of her tribe; "it is a sight that does good to my old eyes, and to all eyes that look upon it. You were wise as well as beautiful, young lady, in coming here this day, yet wiser would you have been had you come earlier, you would sooner have known what it most concerns you to know; yet, much as it concerns you, it concerns yet more your mother, who sits in her little chimney corner by the sea-side, and looks at the picture of the old castle in the crag,—where the falcon built his nest in the old times—that a young lady did, when the lord of that old castle was away at the wars, and little thought how faithless the young warrior was to his lady-love."

Clara coloured at this speech, which implied a much more intimate acquaintance with her own history than she either supposed or desired the gypsey to possess. "You see," continued the other, whose acute eye saw at once the impression she had made on her unsuspecting auditor, "you see it is not in vain we read the stars. No, no; it is not for nothing that it is given to us to know what none others know, but you should have come sooner, you should know that it is ever dangerous to neglect a gypsey's warning,—you know not the might of the evil eye. Well, it is better late than never, though you will still have to wait, long, long perhaps, for the information you are seeking. It is written in the book of fate, that the bark of your hope has many a storm to meet—many a foul wind and many a weary calm, and it cannot enter the port of its wishes, till its sails be filled with the breath of love."

Clara listened to all this jargon with some little impatience, but the feeling of undefined uneasiness which she experienced whilst the gypsey confined herself to eyeing her in solemn silence was gone, the instant the woman began to speak, the secret influence that made her almost tremble before her fixed glance was dispelled to the air; the first words broke the spell, the vulgar ordinary tone, language, and manner, destroyed the power of the dark gleaming and unsympathising eye, and reminded her at once that the age of sibyls was passed, she was speaking to a mere common wandering gypsey, who might perhaps have wormed herself into some family secret, or might have some information that she did not possess, but had no supernatural attributes, and moreover might find her way into prison that very evening for robbing a hen roost.

"I came here, though I had better never have come," said she, firmly, "to receive some intelligence of my poor father. What is it you have to tell? Tell it me at once, and as far as I can I will reward you."

"Intelligence," repeated the other. "What I have to tell, indeed, it's few can tell what I have to tell; aye, I and no other—rich or poor, gentle or simple; but the pearl has its price," and she looked into Clara's eyes with a mixed expression of curiosity and roguery. "The pearl has its price—gold must be paid for gold."

"Gold I have little," returned Clara, "and what little I have is due rather to the support of a living mother, than whom a fonder parent never breathed, than to my curiosity about a dead father whom I never saw; but what I can spare—and something I can spare—you shall have."

"You do not understand me, fair lady," said the gypsy, "perhaps you will not understand me. I did not speak of the base metal of which men make coins, to help knaves to cheat fools; your weight in that gold would not purchase the secret, which I indeed only hold for another, to whom it belongs, and who is resolved to have the worth of it—gold against gold, love against love."

"I do not exactly understand you," replied Clara, "assuredly I love my parents as they love me. My poor father, indeed, I never saw, but still I love him for my mother's sake, for she loved him."

"Truly she did love him," answered the gypsy. "Yes, she loved him dearly, and he was a man to be loved—a man of men—that men envied and women sighed for, but there are yet such men as him on the earth. I know of one,—aye, there are still fine men remaining,—aye, aye, there never was a fish drawn out of the sea, but he left as good a one behind,—aye, he was a man with the eye of an eagle and the heart of a lion, a man that men feared and women loved, that all might look upon and say there is a man,—but there are still as good as he."

"But what is it you have got to tell me," said Clara, growing impatient of the length of this interview, and suspicious moreover that there was some other reason for summoning her thus strangely to this cottage, than to tell her about her father. "I want to know how he lived, how and when he died?"

"When he died!" repeated the gypsy. "When did he die? Is he dead? How do you know that he is dead?"

"I know that he is dead by my mother's words and my mother's weeds," replied Clara; "little as I really know about him there is no doubt of his death."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the gypsy. "Widow's words and widow's weeds! clear proof truly. Come, young lady, there is more written in the stars than you know of; what will you give to know all about your late father? No, not that," interrupting herself, for she saw Clara's slender purse in her hand; "not gold, but what gold cannot buy," she paused, and receiving no reply, went on. "I see that we can do nothing this time, we must meet again, the next time you will hear much—much, matters of great importance:"—and with a mysterious air she withdrew.

"Well?" said Mrs. Gubbins, inquiringly, as the gypsy returned to the kitchen.

"It is no go," replied the other in a whisper. "Could do no business this turn."

"What did she say!" asked the landlady.

"I did not try it on; it would only have scared her, and we should have lost her entirely. She must have more line; we'll try her another time. Mind your hits, ma'am; it's not every day that twenty sovereigns can be picked up so."

"Ten a-piece?" said the other, as if liking a little definite assurance.

"Yes, ten a-piece and no mistake,"—and the gypsey left the cottage, remarking that she had a long way to go.

As Clara left the cottage, a thousand visions crowded upon her fancy. That the gypsey had some knowledge of her and her family, was clear from her allusion to the interior of her dwelling at Somerton, which could only have been derived from actual observation on the spot, and there was something in the unbroken silence which her mother had always preserved on the subject of her father, that had more than once suggested to her mind, that there was some mystery connected with his death, and which made her attach more value than she otherwise would or could have done to the vague and obscure hints of the gypsey. Indeed, the language used by that personage almost tended to raise a doubt in her mind whether he was actually dead, and the speculations to which all this gave rise, so completely absorbed her that she did not observe that several men who were lounging about, eyed her with much curiosity, and laughed as they exchanged observations upon her as they passed. Night was now closing rapidly, the rain fell fast, the wind was getting up, and the gloom of a drizzly autumnal evening was spreading its damp chilliness all around, but it reached not her spirit. Her imagination was excited, and speedily ran riot in a newly created world of its own. Why she knew not, but the future seemed peopled with shadows of joy. Bright visions flashed, and gleamed, and glittered before her eyes, a long sought father found, golden days beginning for her bereaved mother—home—happiness—love—and that called up another vision, a brand snatched from the burning, and the family group was completed by a fourth, and so she conjured up ideal forms and ideal joys, and laughed to herself, and talked to herself, and pressed on through the gloom of the evening, enveloped in an atmosphere of her own joyous hopes and bright imaginings, that set the elements at nought, and yet she little knew that at that very moment a dark gulf was opening at her feet.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"It is a mighty pleasant way of travelling this," said O'Driscoll to Fritz, as the vessel stood away to the eastward, "slipping along ten mile an hour, like a snail in his own house, none of your packing baggage or pressing carts, none of your looking for billets in a hail-storm, with sore feet, none of your tumbling out in the cold, and falling in in the dark with a day's trudging on the mud, staring you in the face, its elegant work yachting; did ever you travel on a railroad, ould chap?"

"Oh nein!" replied the German.

"On nine," repeated O'Driscoll in astonishment, "why man alive, there's only one in the world, that's the road betchuxt Liverpool and Manchester. I'll tell you one thing, my boy, never travel outside on a railway. I did wanst. The guard toul't me not; 'naboclish,' thinks I, he thinks I'll see him drinkin, sleepin', and the like; 'I won't tell,' says I, and up I got. Well, sir, first and foremost, they rung a bell, and afore I had time to cross myself, the engine gave a screech, and out come a power of steam that almost dhrouded me, to say nothing of scalding, for it was blazing hot, like a thunder-cloud afore the lightnin is well out of it, 'take the kittle off,' shouts I, and by the same token the engine gave a roar, and bang came a shower of cinders into my face and down my throat, they amost choked me, they bunged up my eyes in a jiffy, and by the time I got them open agin, by dad I thought it was all up with me, then we were coming along at the rate of a fox hunt, and sure enough we had to go into a hole that did'nt look six inches higher than the top of the carriage, 'gloria in excelsis, mind your hits, heads,' says I, and I lay down on the roof, 'aeioudsht, aeioudsht, aeioudsht,' says the engine, when we got into the tunnel, clank, clank, clank, went all the divilment they had to dhraw us with, and every now and then you'd pass by a lamp, at such a rate, that you'd think it was a boy taking a shot at you. 'Peccavi,' says I, 'peccavi, peccavi, peccavi, don't you hear me, I'm in a hobble now;' but, however, we came out safe, and afore the train was well stopped at the next station, I jumped off, and you may take your oath I never got up outside a railway train again. However, I suppose you hav'nt railways in Frinch. There's my Lord's bell,"—and the two commenced the preparations for breakfast.

The rest of the voyage of the Arab passed in the usual manner, nothing occurring out of the way to break the monotony common to the use of the sea as a highway. Acre was the port, such as it was, at which Lord de Creci intended to land, but the desire of seeing an old friend, and one worth seeing too, induced him, in the first instance, to touch at Sidon, and towards the middle of September, the Arab arrived at that city, and a messenger was forthwith despatched into the mountains, to the residence of the far-famed Lady of Palmyra, the

Sittee Inglis, as she was called by the natives of Syria, to announce the arrival of an old friend and his companion, and request an audience, taking care to set forth Henry's military character; for her Ladyship, having been most seriously pestered by that singular variety of the human species that infests Syria and other foreign lands, calling themselves British travellers, and held by the natives to be at least as mad as March hares, had become exceedingly inaccessible of late, but still preserved some little regard for naval and military officers. The morning they spent in rambling about the mulberry groves, and returned towards noon on board, for during the heat of the day, even the cabin of the Arab was rather cooler than any place to be found on shore. Dinner was postponed until the return of the messenger who had been despatched to Djoun, for Lord de Creci was sufficiently aware of the singular habits and way of thinking, of the peculiar personage whom they were about to visit, and knew that if her answer was favourable, the dining before starting, and not depending upon her hospitality for their evening meal, would be an unpardonable offence in her eyes, and if it did not prevent her granting them an interview at all, would at least bring on a fit of bad humour, that would prevent them deriving much pleasure from their visit. Harry had just finished a bit of biscuit to sustain nature, until this weighty question should be decided, and desired his servant to bring him a glass of water.

"Fritz, you villin," said O'Driscoll, "where's the water?"

"Comment vilain," said Fritz, "how dare you?"

"Whisht, now, and give us the water, Fritz, you thief of the world," said Terry.

"Dieb der Welt," muttered Fritz; "sacré, que veut il dire."

"No give it here, it's me that wants it," said O'Driscoll; "give us the water, ould Bloodybones."

"Element," said Fritz, beginning to get angry.

"Yes, that's it, it's the element the Captain's calling for."

"Mr. O'Driscoll, I like not the sobriquet."

"The divil doubt you," said the other; "I never heard tell of the man that did like bein sober, barrin that he could not help it."

"Es ist nicht erlaubt."

"It is not a what? manners, man, and give us the water," and having procured it, he brought it into the cabin, where his master was sitting, and forthwith received a sharp rating for quarrelling with Fritz.

"Well, Sir, just as you plase, I'll make friends with him agin," said he, as he went forward.

"You see, Mr. Fritz, my honey," said he, "it's a mighty short little nub of a name that one of yours, a mighty good name for a bottle of Guinness, or a flash in the pan, or to call the cat by, or the like, but t's no ways respectable enough to call a christian by; so you see, I'm bleegeed, outof respect to you, to fill it up by way of shottin it, with some hing like, Fritz you villin, Fritz my hearty, Fritz and be d—d to you, or the like, so that them haythens and rabbers that's standin' about will hink I'm addressin' you with proper respect, its much more shutable."

"Bien, so ist gut," said Bluthenbaum, his temporary annoyance much mollified by nibbling at a chocolate toad, of which delicacy, having

that taste for confectionary that seems so strange to us in grown up male foreigners, he was very fond, and always kept a large stock.

"I'd like to see St. Patrick if he saw an Irishman do that," said Terry, as he ascended the hatchway to see what was going on in the bay. "I wouldn't touch even the figure of the baste, if they made all the taylor in the country into a plaster, he's a quare subject that Fritz," continued he, musing upon another peculiarity of the Alsatian, that converting his food into a soup or stew as he invariably did before eating it; "he's a quare subject and has mighty contrairy ways o' his own, he dhrinks his vittles and he ates his tay. Hollo! halt! wh comes there! Boat a-hoy."

The boat he apostrophised pulled rapidly alongside, it contained the answer from the Sittee Inglis, expressing the pleasure she would feel in renewing her acquaintance with Lord de Creci, and in making that of Captain Mowbray, whose father she was pleased to say she remembered perfectly, as having once proposed to Mr. Pitt a project of new modelling the British Constitution upon an improved system of electing a fresh parliament every quarter sessions, which that statesman regretted that it was not in his power to adopt.

Immediately on the receipt of this missive they started on their ride, on the horses the lady had sent for them, and for eight or nine miles, which the character of the so-called road, made uncommonly long ones, the scenery became wilder and wilder, sometimes they wound round the corners of precipices by a path that was more to be called a stone shelf than a road, sometimes it threaded among protruding rocks whose gaunt and savage aspect seemed to threaten to kick the intruder at once into the ravine, sometimes it took advantage of the absence of the proper occupier, to turn a water-course into a bridle-way, till at length they reached the secluded residence of the Sittee Inglis. It had more the air of a baronial stronghold than a lady's bower, the walls were lofty, but the absence of battlements or loop-holes, turrets or flanking defences, the grim but still ornamental fringe and embroidery of military architecture gave them an air of gloomy bareness. No heraldic shield or antient coat of arms dignified the simple gateway, but the ponderous gates were manifestly intended and calculated to repel any desultory attack from the Arabs, from whom no other mode of assault was to be feared, scaling-ladders forming no part of the military appointments of a robber tribe. The country around was dreary and dusty, parched and brown, as if the land were withered.

"Strange it is," said Lord de Creci, "that a high-born, high-hearted woman should quit all the intellectual pleasures that her situation in England commanded, to immure herself in the lifeless solitude of a desolated and decaying country; I never saw a more gloomy building in my life."

"No," said Harry, "it's just one of those confounded places that give you the trouble of lugging a gun up to it, and then when you have got your gun in battery, surrender without shewing any sport."

"She is one of the most remarkable of a remarkable race," continued the Earl, smiling at the professional view taken of the singular scene they were entering, by his companion.

"I suppose so," returned Harry, looking round, and indeed the spot in some degree justified his supposition; but the gates at this moment flew open, and a strange contrast presented itself, an enclosure full of thick, clustering trees, and surrounded, or rather scattered round by plain buildings of one story, and of a character of mixed European and Asiatic architecture, which might be called the outer court, received the travellers, who there dismounted and were conducted through an embowered passage, covered thickly with jasmine, and other fragrant shrubs to the inner court, which in fact was a small but well kept garden, into a little summer-house or rather verandah, against the wall. They found it fitted up in the European style, and a dinner prepared for them, which neither of them objected to, the air of the Lebanon being cold and bracing, and they were informed by an attendant of the most portentous gravity, that the Lady would receive them when the sun was down.

"I do not believe that she ever gets up until near sunset," said Lord de Creci; "she never eats with the few strangers she receives, and touches little meat and less wine."

"She does not extend that injunction to her guests," observed the Captain, filling his glass with the light red wine of the Lebanon; "it behoves us to drink if it were only to shew that we are good Christians."

"You must be prepared for something strange," returned Lord de Creci, "our hostess is no ordinary woman, there is that in her, not to say unearthly or supernatural in itself, but that will suggest such ideas to your mind."

"So I am," said Henry; "I expect every moment to see a magician or an astrologer."

"You may see something of the sort, Mowbray," returned the Earl solemnly, fixing an uneasy glance upon his companion as if, without being angry with him, he was displeased at his levity; "there is much in our hostess that separates her from the rest of womankind or indeed mankind, there is much in the East—" Here he checked himself and smiled slightly, as one who had well nigh revealed opinions and views that were better concealed in the recesses of his own heart, and he spoke no more for some time. These fits of meditation in the Earl, were so common that Harry had gradually ceased to take any notice of them, further than with instinctive tact to avoid disturbing them; he found the fruit excellent, and leaving his companion to indulge in what speculations he might think fit, so occupied himself that could the vineyards of the Lebanon have been gifted with a voice, they would unanimously have deposed to his being a good Christian, according to the test he had alluded to, in any court of law in Islam or out of it.

The sun went down, and they were ushered into the presence of the Lady, and there Henry began to experience the feeling of half suppressed awe, with which the place and the woman had evidently impressed his companion. The room was long and narrow, and was dimly lighted, and instantly reminded him of the secret chamber in the thickness of the wall at his own Castle of Falconsrag; to European eyes it seemed bare of furniture, but at the further end it was crossed,

for its whole breadth by an ottoman about eighteen inches high, whence as they approached, a tall and commanding figure arose, and greeted them with a queenly dignity, rendered winning by all the attraction that a sweet and soft voice can add to kind words.

"Your father's son is ever welcome to my roof, my Lord de Creci," said she, "and you also Mr. Mowbray, old blood is like old wine, fine, clear, rare and costly, and I may add commonly welcome; I am happy to receive you, though I do not choose to gratify the curiosity of every tour tinker, who thinks he has trod Syrian soil in vain if he leaves one lion unseen. I knew your father too, Mr. Mowbray, he was a fine fellow, though he was against us."

Harry's eyes had now accommodated themselves to the darkness, and he was enabled to take a more satisfactory view of the hostess. She was attired as was her custom, in the male attire of the country, but the amplitude of its folds prevented its appearing offensive to the eye, and indeed it harmonised with the broad forehead, almost masculine cast of feature and expression of animated energy of her countenance, over which more than half a century had passed, and left hardly a wrinkle in the clear white skin.

"The English travellers, the chiffonniers of literature," continued she, "are the bane of my existence, they come, they stare, and they succeed, that is to say, they sell their books, the only object in life that the grovelling instincts of selfish cunning, that they call their minds, are capable of embracing; they sell their piratical patchwork in the strength of the confidence they violate, and the privacy they intrude on, they are vermin."

"I have often heard of the inconvenience your Ladyship is subjected to by wandering Europeans," said Lord de Creci; "I trust that you find the Turkish authorities more satisfactory to deal with."

"Not so much so as before," returned she; "as long as I paid them well, they would have kissed the ground on which I trod, but now it is otherwise, and the Syrian Christians are little better, they are treacherous, filthy, cowardly dogs, they are the refuse of Italy, Sicily, and Greece, not aboriginal Syrians, but the scum of the Levant, which is the scum of the earth."

"I presume the Arabs are your favourites," said Lord de Creci, "the untamed sons of the desert, are at all events a pure race."

"The Arabs are better," returned she, "but they are too untamed, there is a limit to freedom, as well as there is to ocean, and they have overpassed that limit, for they are free from principle or gratitude, and the last is a deadly sin in my eyes. The Druses are really the cream of the population of Syria, temperate, hospitable, and upright; they are certainly vindictive, but I think more as a point of honour than from revengeful feelings; the avenger of blood feels himself charged with a sacred duty, which he must perform, and he performs it accordingly; I often lean to the idea that some of the blood of the crusaders lingers in the Druse villages, certain it is there is a mysterious sympathy between them and the English, they imagine that there are still many Druses in England, and whenever the time arrives for dispossessing the Moslem from these glorious countries of old times,



they will assuredly be on the side of the Christians, and render infinitely more efficient assistance, than the Maronites, Christians though they call themselves. The Druse religion will turn to anything: it is an odd jumble of Judaism, Mahomedanism, Christianity, and Paganism; but the charge of worshipping a golden calf is untrue, it is a sort of confused theism, like your father's, Mr. Mowbray, or your own." Henry started, as well he might, at this abrupt allusion; how she became acquainted with his father's opinions, or his own he could not conjecture, nor was he allowed time to form theories of his own upon the subject, for the Lady went on as if she had made the simplest observation in the world. "Yes," said she, fixing her eye steadily upon him, "I can read the handwriting of the father in the countenance of the son, I can see his scepticism in your eye, his pride in your nostrils, and his self-reliance on your lips; the lines that the soul stamps in the countenance, deepen with long descent, for they are traced by an immortal graver; eyes such as mine that have derived power, and strength, and skill from reading the stars, easily read the coarse characters that are written on the human face."

"Nothing can be more perfect than your Ladyship's penetration into character," said Lord de Creci, laughing at the rapid sketch of the Mowbrays, father and son, that she had dashed off, "it is absolutely miraculous."

"Are you not in the land of miracles, my Lord Earl?" said she sharply, "the soil where the ruling power sets aside its own laws, through whose air, purified by its events, the stars can be read? you little know in your far-off island of fat acres, and heavy heads, and heavy hearts, what virtue yet lingers in the air of the glowing East. You may cut down the grass, but the spring brings up a fresh crop; you may level the castle, but the ruins remain; the star that guided the wise men is yet in the East, but it does not shine upon the spinners of cotton, and the wranglers about taxes in the West. How else could I have known your friend's character before he was five minutes under my roof?"

Lord de Creci made no answer, he thought that he could have explained that easily enough, for probably no man ever carried his character more legibly written on his countenance than did Harry at the time that his attention was strongly directed to something that he did not very perfectly understand, and his earnestness of look brought out the expression of his features, as was the case at present.

"I know yet more about him," continued the lady, "I know it is yet his destiny to save the life of one dear to her he loves; yet there are still dark lines written in the book of his future. Fire, steel, storm, blood, are all indicated, but song shall prevail over all, and the sceptic shall hail the words of inspiration as the words of love. I remember," continued she, turning suddenly towards Lord de Creci, "the very first time I ever saw your poor uncle William, my spirit leaped towards him, I was restless till I became acquainted with him; I was young and inexperienced then, and did not know the reason; at one time I thought I was falling in love with him, which is a weakness that nobody will think of charging me with now; but I found

out afterwards that we were both born in the same day and at the same hour, our Houses in the Heavens were the same, and our souls anticipated that communion on earth. Yet you know very well that it was not what men call love that brought us together. It was not me,"—she paused for a moment and looked at Lord de Creci inquiringly, "Lady Susan? is she still alive?"

"She is," returned the Earl, gravely.

"Unmarried?"

"Yes," said he, almost relapsing into a smile.

"I see what you are smiling at," said she, "I only remember the beautiful girl she was,—I forget that a quarter of a century has passed since I saw her;—well, it was a sad business, I knew all about what was going to happen long before any of you did,—and the child, is he yet alive?"

"The child is a man," replied Lord de Creci, "and bears arms in the service of his country."

"It is well," returned the Lady, sadly, for thoughts of other and gentler days were evidently crowding thick upon her as the friends of her youth rose fast before her eyes, all assuming the aspect they wore when she last saw them, and each summoning another, and another, and another, from the dark vaults of memory. "It was a sad business, few were cognizant of it, and the grave holds most of them now,—both so young too—he was little more than seventeen—" she mused in silence for a few moments. "He and I were both born too near the vernal equinox to enjoy untroubled lives—poor creature, his was an untimely tomb." Her eye now lighted up again. "Yes," said she, "it was the influence of our common star that gave me that inscrutable craving to look into his spirit; but even to those who are not linked by that Astral tie, certain stars have an affinity; as for instance, yours and Mr. Mowbray's, people irresistibly attracted towards one another, when their stars are in conjunction at the birth of either, and the electric fluid is the vehicle of sympathetic thoughts. On the other hand, certain stars are antipathic. There are people whom you detest the very instant you see them, and here a remarkable instance of conflicting influence takes place. If by the power of your will, you overcome this hate, which is a part of original sin, the demon that directs it is deprived of his power, and his place taken by his opposite, that is the same psychological process as the electrical one of the positive and negative pole, and your friendship with those persons becomes the most enduring possible. These are things that are above your comprehension. Men do not know the powers of their own minds, which properly laboured upon, are fully as susceptible of elevation as matter. Two thousand years ago, a block of marble lay on the ground, it was marble then, undeveloped marble, a stone, you might have built with it, made houses of it,—it is nothing but marble now, but it is developed marble, it is the Apollo Belvidere. So with the mind, it is a vulgar error to suppose that the soul must pass through the gates of death, and become disentangled from the body before it can enter the invisible world. The soul, whose thoughts are bounded by the clay it resides in, is earthly; but let it aspire to things celestial, and it partakes of their

nature, it refines, it sublimes, it acquires lightness to soar, and strength to maintain its flight, and thus things become visible to it that are invisible to the common spirit, just as you cannot see through new wine whilst it is fermenting ; but you can see through its beautiful tints when it is clear and settled. Then the soul becomes capable of understanding the harmony of the universe, of unravelling the tangled threads that intertwine the destinies of mortal man with the course of the immortal stars. These bodies in their movements and conjunctions each influence the fates of individuals in some of the others, just as the attractions and repulsions of these bodies act upon the masses in each separate system ; but that is matter, and less expansive than mind. You fancy that the heavens are a great toy-shop, of which the earth is the counter ; it is no such thing, the earth is but a speck among millions of millions, all bound together, but all dependant upon one another like the stones of an arch ; but these things you cannot understand."

In this concluding observation Harry agreed so cordially that he had for sometime ceased to listen to the mystic sentences that her Ladyship poured out with a delivery whose fluency could only be equalled by its earnestness, and he ventured to steal a look at Lord de Creci, to see what effect these doctrines had on him. His Lordship was standing with his arms folded, listening with an air of deep attention and interest to all that she said. He made no answer however, and the Lady continued, "Yes, it is only in these regions that such communion can be enjoyed. This is the land for the far-seers. Here for twenty years I have lived, reading the deathless character in the boundless book of the universe, and here I will die. Say nothing, Lord de Creci ; I know what you are going to say ; my going back to England is quite out of the question. I have nothing in common with the dull people of England, and the whole country itself would seem to me but a casket with the jewel rifled,—empty, valueless ; I that have lived with Mr. Pitt, whom else could I find to live with.—No, no," continued she, more vehemently, evidently becoming more and more excited as the stream of her thoughts flowed into a course more personal to herself. "They may say that I am mad, if it be madness not to herd with fools so be it, but to England I return no more. I tell you, as I told a countryman of yours not long ago, that Syria is my country, the Lebanon my heart's hills, and Palmyra my city. I know I am encompassed with perils, true,—but I am no stranger to them : I have suffered shipwreck off the coast of Cyprus, I have fallen from my horse near Acre, and been trampled upon by him. I have been deserted in the hour of my utmost need, when all supposed I was dying of the plague, but my hour was not yet come, and the gratitude of a poor widow preserved me ; I have encountered the robbers of the desert, and when my servants quailed I have galloped in among them, and compelled them to be courteous ; and when a horde of plunderers was breaking in at my gate, I sallied out among them sword in hand, and when I had convinced them that they had not the power to hurt me, however they might have the will, I fed them at my gate, and they behaved like thankful beggars. Here I am destined to remain : what is written in

the great book of life, who can alter it? It is true I am surrounded by perils; it is true I am at war with the Prince of the Mountains and the Pasha of Acre, both of whom are abundantly capable of assassination, but if I do perish, my fall shall be a bloody one; I have plenty of arms, good Damascus blades—I use no fire-arms, and while I have an arm to wield a hanjar, these barren rocks shall have a banquet of slaughter before my face looks black in the presence of my enemies, and two hundred years hence the Bedouins of the desert shall talk of the Sittee Inglis; how she sat on her Arab steed, and fell sword in hand, like an Arab chief, when the star of her glory set for ever.”

The Lady seemed almost exhausted by this effort, she sat down again, and reclined on the cushions for a few moments without speaking. Lord de Creci seemed little inclined to interrupt her silence; at last she fixed her eyes upon Henry, and seemed to study his countenance with a scrutinizing glance, under which that gentleman became exceedingly impatient; an attempt which he made to stare her out, broke down immediately, her eyes were to all appearance steadily directed towards his face, but still he could not succeed in catching them as it is called,—it seemed as if her eye covered an internal veil through which she saw distinctly, and yet which was not penetrable to eyes from without.

“I remember,” said she, “sometime before you were born, when I was Mr. Pitt’s private secretary, a project your father sent him for a reform in the representation of the empire, in which he insisted upon the necessity of the colonies being directly represented in Parliament. He argued that if the colonies were given local legislatures, as they must be sooner or later, if they did not send members to the Imperial Parliament, these bodies would in process of time become strong enough to embarrass the government, and they would then put a price upon themselves, and insist upon being bought individually, like the Irish Parliament, and that it would be better to strangle this evil in the cradle than let it grow up to man’s estate, such as it will do in the present century. He maintained that six and twenty members in addition for America, would have preserved America for England, and pointed out the fallacy of a legislation in a colony, whose executive is responsible to a distinct tribunal—the government at home, and the impossibility of reconciling the two. He made a great impression on me; not that I think much of the delusion that people call representation, but that I prefer a humbug that wins, to a humbug that loses.”

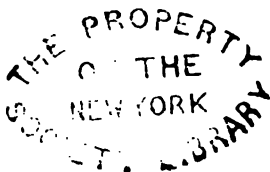
“Most people do,” observed Harry, who felt his confidence wonderfully restored by her Ladyship resorting to the use of such a familiar word as “humbug;” it seemed like a descent from the stars to the earth.

“Most people do,” repeated the Lady, “even the highest, even Mahomet, who undoubtedly believed himself to be inspired, could not resist the temptation of reducing his household expenses by the employment of his gift of inspiration, and gravely reprehends his wives in the Koran, for their constant craving for new shawls,—it was no small matter finding them in shawls, certainly, for there were seventeen of them,—but can any stronger proof be adduced of the illimitable empire of humbug? Mahomet’s wives, and the new shawls that he

grudged them, mixed up with that noble undertaking—the one man against the might of leagued Paganism, one alone—dauntless and victorious—forming part of that magnificent work, that great sword-faith, that in one century spread itself from the Indus to the Atlantic, from the Zahara to the steppes of Tartary. It is a fact,” continued she, rising and evidently preparing to terminate the interview, “that a Mahometan negro is a better Christian than a Christian negro. You need not laugh, Mr. Mowbray ; I know what I am saying well enough. What I mean is not that either the one or the other is qualified to fill the chair of a professor of theology, but that the Mahometan negro will know more about the precepts of the Christian faith and observe them better, than the Christian negro will ; their minds are not fitted to receive the truth pure and clean, but mixed and diluted, as it is in Mahometanism, they are capable of receiving it, and that, *pro tanto*, is so much gain, nature never jumps ; the laws of modulation are inseparable from the harmony of the universe. Good night, gentlemen, may your journey be prosperous.” Here she paused for a moment, and looked fixedly upon Henry. “His eye is steel free,” muttered she ; “it has looked too long on battle, and grown steady under fire,—Lord de Creci,” said she aloud, “you know this country ; it is unnecessary to caution you, but your young friend is fiery. Remember, Mr. Mowbray, that though in the East your carrying arms may assure your life, the using them will often insure death. Farewell !”

Harry watched her tall figure vanishing, and then turned to Lord de Creci. “Come,” said he, “she is pretty liberal in her notions of faith too.”

“There is a difference between the toleration of knowledge for ignorance, and the indifference of ignorance to knowledge,” replied the Earl sharply, as they prepared to depart.



CHAPTER XXIX.

IN conjecturing that the laugh which had grated so harshly upon her ears, immediately after she had passed the party of sportsmen that had met her, in her way through the park, had been raised at her expense, Clara unhappily was not wrong, it had been called forth by a remark made by Sir Thomas Horton, on her choosing so late an hour in the evening for an excursion beyond the bounds of the park. It would have been well for Clara, had this remark been made in that singular spirit of self-deception in which vulgar-minded men, often imagine that they exalt themselves, by disparaging women; that they acquire a character for knowledge of the world, and insight into the human mind, by repeating maxims that their auditors know as well as themselves are exploded cynicisms, out of long detected compilations of platitudes, courteously styled maxims, though minims would probably express their value better; who indulge in the flattering illusion that they impress their hearers, and the world in general, with a high notion of their own success among the fair sex, partly by falsehoods, that are positively heroic in their directness, partly by insinuations that leave little room for imagination to fill up and dress them in the garb of facts, and shut their eyes, with an ostrich-like self-delusion, to the circumstance of the universal disbelief in their assertions; it would have been well for Clara if this had been the character of the observation made by Sir Thomas as she passed, but unfortunately it was not the case. Sir Thomas knew better, and would have been the first person to detect, and unsparingly to expose any such attempt at false philosophy, or false pretensions in another, and his remark was made with a settled malignity for a fixed purpose, that of raising a discussion as to where she was going, in which he contrived to enlist the curiosity of his companions, to such an extent, that he succeeded in persuading them to watch her proceedings, which, by a short cut through the park, they were enabled to do, until they fairly saw her enter the cottage.

"What is that written up on the board?" said Sir Thomas, "I cannot make it out."

"I make it to be something about BARILLA, soap-boiling, or washer-woman," said one.

"Oh!" said another, "she is not a belle blanchiseuse, its something like LACHRYMA, it's an undertaker's."

"A school more likely," said another, "if that be the true reading."

"It is a tombstone cutter's," suggested Sir Thomas, "I read it, 'HIC JACET.'"

"Eureka," cried Lord Chorley, "you are all wrong, I have deciphered the hieroglyphics, it is LILAC VILLA."

ka, you're right, I suppose that is the proper translation, it Villa, I can read it plain enough, and I see the actual tree it is the sign and token," said another.

"Lilac Villa," said Sir Thomas: "our Columbus, Chorley, the egg on its right end, and we all know as much as him is Lilac Villa sure enough,"—and having succeeded in the e had in view, viz the fixing the name of the cottage into ey had seen Clara enter on the memory of his companions, he ray to the house.

the party assembled before dinner, it was reinforced by sta, not strangers to our readers, being in fact, Messrs. Mac-r, and Fitzgerald, who having come over to London, the one ess, the other, not exactly on business, but rather with an eye d been immediately included in the hospitalities of Ellesmere. iness which brought Mr. MacGallagher to Ellesmere, was no a his appointment to the agency of the Avonmore estates, Lord e having finally made up his mind to give up the system of ng a lawyer in Dublin to collect his rents, and leaving the of the estate in the hand of Providence, and determined upon ally represented on his lands by one who should devote his the interests and improvement alike of the estate and the , in so far as the aforesaid tenantry would permit him. His a, as is commonly the case in such matters, had been to appoint lishman or Scotchman, but upon a careful consideration of estion in all its bearings, he saw reason to change his mind, hat though it is true that the cooler Saxon does *his* work well, ple certainly do not work so well under him; there are points hich Pat must be humoured, places where he will lead but will e, and occasions upon which he cannot be made to understand at has been 'the ways of the place,' as he calls some eminently customs, for centuries, should be altered; moreover on some of occasions Pat is right, and in a great many more, without Pat ltogether right, the improver is entirely wrong, as in a case llect, when a benevolent lady, hearing of the constant wet that d in the country, and justly considering that wet feet were the f the ills that flesh is heir to, in short, that it was having at ie foot in the grave, considerably bestowed upon her brother- tenantry, an extensive assortment of pattens. It was well d, but, unhappily, the damsels in question had not as yet d the habit of wearing shoes or stockings, and the pattens were ently superfluous.

ring Mr. MacGallagher to be a strictly honest man, Lord re accordingly decided upon appointing him his locum tenens Vest, and he had come over to talk over the state of matters t leisure, to receive *viva voce* instructions as to what improve- night be attempted with some sort of chance of success. Mr. old had arrived with certain phantasmagoric visions of his own, h love and ambition were combined in a manner that partook sublime, to such an extent, that malicious persons would have they made the one step further. However, consoling himself

with the maxim much in vogue among gentlemen, who purvey to the pleasures of the people on race courses, by means of a pea and three thimbles, "them as ventures may win, them as don't venture can't expect to win," and fortified by extensive reading in some well selected romances, novels, tales, stories, poems, &c. &c., which his sisters had procured from the circulating library at Ballymacdaniel, wherein it is demonstrated that it is the most natural and regular thing in the world for any member of the penniless professions, soldier, poet, scholar, or other born pauper to aspire to, and finally after a given amount of adventure, make lawful prize of any Princess, Countess, Heiress, or other attractive object who may have a cross father, proud mother, rich lover, or other obstacle to his suit. Under these circumstances we need do no more than state that he made a desperate rush when dinner was announced, to secure Lady Madelaine, in which he was successful, and he now sat by her side, revolving in his mind the fates and fortunes of the above mentioned fortune-hunters, whose names became mixed and confounded in his brain, until it presented a chaos like the visiting cards of a whole season accumulated in a basket, the various courses to take jostled one another till he hardly knew what was going on about him, and the first glance he cast at his neighbour on the other side, could not have tended much to restore his faculties to their due equilibrium, for it was met by a look that one man only at that table could give, a glance composed of a savage contempt, and a rapid penetration, from the lowering countenance of Sir Thomas Horton, who sat between him and the noble hostess. During dinner time, however, Lady Sarah's attention was more than once attracted by Sir Thomas's demeanour towards the Marchioness, with whom he conversed in a mysterious manner, as if he were communicating something or other, which, whilst it was a subject that required that she should be acquainted with, at the same time astonished her exceedingly. She several times turned round to him, as if almost incredulous as to what he was telling her, and at last Lady Sarah observed her fix her eyes upon Mr. Montague Marsden with an expression that made her turn her own eyes in that direction, and the sight that met them threw her into a paroxysm of laughter. Mr. Montague Marsden's face, forehead, temples, crown and all, was at a red heat, his eyes were twinkling, his mouth was twitching, his fingers kept moving so as to give his knife and fork the appearance of being acted upon by some irregular galvanic power, he looked not only as if he were sitting on thorns, but as if it was raining thorns also, for he was fully persuaded in his mind, that Sir Thomas was treating Lady Ellesmere to a full and true account, *bien garni*, of his unsuccessful affair with Mrs. Hastings. As, however, the narration proceeded, an expression of gravity, even of anxiety appeared in Lady Ellesmere's face to Mr. Marsden's infinite relief, and his countenance brightened up into an oily lustre, in direct proportion as her's darkened, for he suspected, that had Sir Thomas really been giving her an account of the cruel hoax he had entrapped him into, her Ladyship must have exhibited some token of being amused. She, however, grew graver and graver.

"I cannot understand all this, Sir Thomas," she said, "Mr. Marsden must be a good authority on the subject, and he would not have ventured to deceive us."

"He had his reasons," said Sir Thomas, with a grim smile, "not good ones perhaps, but good enough for him."

"I must inquire how he came to,—I cannot think that he has deceived us, he may be deceived himself."

"Very easy," said Sir Thomas, laughing as he thought of his last essay upon Mr. Marsden's credulity, "but asking him about it, would be a needless inhumanity, it would be opening a green wound."

"How so?" asked the lady.

"Mr. Montague Marsden," said Sir Thomas, gravely, "has a heart."

"Has he?" said Lady Ellesmere, as if that fact now occurred to her for the first time.

"Yes," said Sir Thomas, "and you know that the course of true love never did run smooth, though to look at him you would suppose nothing could run otherwise than smooth, he is the very incarnation of smoothness in his own person."

"Why surely," said Lady Ellesmere, opening a pair of very grey eyes, till the white round them became distinctly visible, "you do not say Mr. Marsden was attached to her?"

"I must not betray Mr. Marsden," said Sir Thomas, heroically, and then with a look at Lady Ellesmere, as if he was saying to himself, 'I've had enough out of you for one day,' he turned courteously to Mr. Fitzgerald and asked him to drink wine with him.

"I'd be proud to have the honour," answered that gentleman in some slight trepidation.

"What shall it be?" said Sir Thomas, apparently measuring the intellect of the worthy Hibernian by probing, or as it were guaging his eye,—“Hock?”

"If you please."

"It is a pleasant wine," observed Sir Thomas, as he finished his glass, "Markbrunner."

"Indeed it is," returned Mr. Fitzgerald, "only not quite tart enough; marked Brunner is it? I've a capital bin of it in my little castle, away in Ireland, marked Pontac," added he stoutly, "pleasant summer wine." Sir Thomas smiled slightly at this extension of the Rhine, to the southernmost point of Africa, but he said nothing, he seemed to have suddenly taken a fancy to Mr. Fitzgerald, either out of pure affection, or for the purpose of making some use or other of him, and blandly inquired how long he meant to stay.

"About a month or six weeks," said Mr. Fitzgerald, with an air of careless indifference, "there and thereabouts, at least if my Lord will let me go away then."

"So long as that?" said Sir Thomas, thoughtfully.

"Faith, yes."

"That will do very well," said the other.

"Will it?—I'm glad to hear it."

"Eh? what?" said Sir Thomas, unconscious that what he intended as an aside to himself, had been spoken aloud.

"Yes," said Mr. Fitzgerald, beginning to get puzzled again, and Sir Thomas relapsed into silence, but it was that sort of silence that indicated no repose of the mind. His brow was lowering, his glance shifted uneasily from the face of each of those sitting opposite him to another, as if there was an undefinable dread of something in his mind, and sometimes his lip would move as if he muttered dark words to himself, and then a sardonic smile would brighten his face, as a flash of lightning might light up a grinning scull in the darkness of the charnel. So completely did the expression of his countenance differ from that of an ordinary human creature, occupied by the ordinary speculations of human nature, that Lady Sarah, indignant at finding even her light spirit checked by the repulsive object before her, whispered to Lord Chorley that she verily believed Sir Thomas was possessed.

"I verily believe so too," returned his Lordship, "when we were in the fields to-day, a single partridge, the last of a covey, got up close to him, and at the same moment a rat crossed his path, and nothing would content him, but after bagging the bird he must let his other barrel into the rat; now sport is sport, partridge shooting is heavenly, you look up to the sky: but shooting a rat, you look down to the earth, to say no worse, mere killing for killing sake is diabolical."

The subject of this conversation soon recovered from his momentary fit of abstraction, and almost immediately afterwards, with much of the air and manner Mephistopheles may be supposed to have assumed, when he proposed to the gnawing, yet undefined yearnings of the dreamy student, to see first the little then the great world, he addressed himself to Mr. Fitzgerald, whose countenance presented at first a singular contrast between his annoyance at being thus forcibly diverted from his siege of Lady Madelaine, and his gratified vanity at being taken so much notice of by one of whom he stood in very considerable awe.

"Look at him now," said Lord Chorley.

"Yes, look at him now," said Lady Sarah, "it is a perfect tableau vivant.

"It is an antient mariner
And he stoppeth one of these
By the long grey beard, and glittering eye
Now wherefore stoppest thou me:

"He's destroying the poor man's chance with Madelaine,

"The guests are met, the feast is set,
May'st hear the merry din.

"Poor creature, I pity him,

"He holds him by his glittering eye,
The wedding guest stands still,
And listens like a three years child,
The mariner hath his will.

"I wonder what his will may be ;

"The wedding guest, he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear,
And thus spake on that aged man,
The bright eyed mariner."

"I wonder what he is saying," said Lord Chorley.

"I should think constructing some of the most colossal fictions that were ever engendered in the brain of man, for Mr. Fitzgerald's benefit."

"The mariner hath his will," observed his Lordship, "see his listener is becoming more attentive every moment, he is smiling."

"He is pleased at something or other," said Lady Sarah, "that is just the way he smiled, I remember, once when Madelaine asked him who represented the Desmond branch of the Fitzgeralds now, I do believe he had a great mind to say he did."

Whatever the subject of their conversation might have been, it is certain that Sir Thomas did, during dinner time, and even after the ladies had retired, fascinate the helpless Mr. Fitzgerald, after the manner in which a rattlesnake fascinates a bird, and to judge from an occasional gleam of satisfied malice, that every now and then glared across his countenance, with intentions not much more benevolent. It was however as a tool not as a victim, that he wanted Mr. Fitzgerald.

Sir Thomas upon entering the drawing-room, for some time kept an earnest and anxious watch upon the Marchioness, and when upon a signal from her, that she wished to communicate with him, he saw Mr. Marsden approach their hostess, his brows contracted, his lips became colourless, his eye fixed, and he presented the appearance of a gambler, whose last stake is on the table, and to whom the next cast must bring either a partial respite, or total ruin.

"Mr. Marsden," said Lady Ellesmere, "you were intimately acquainted with the family of Hastings, at Somerton, were you not?"

"Oh very intimately indeed, my lady," said Mr. Marsden, piteously, a species of rose-coloured moisture varnishing his face as he spoke.

"You have known Miss Hastings from a child."

"Yes, my Lady, in a pinafore."

"And of course you have been on intimate terms with Mrs. Hastings. I know that when you wrote to us for the purpose of recommending her daughter, you thought of her—"

"As you wrote," her Ladyship would have said, but from Mr. Marsden giving the expression 'you thought of her,' the matrimonial signification it sometimes bears, nothing doubting but that Sir Thomas had already put her in possession of his unsuccessful courtship of the widow, in all its details, and a great many more, and that now Lady Ellesmere, actuated by a pitiless curiosity was about to compel him to narrate the whole story himself, he here broke in in desperation—

"Thought of her; yes, I thought of her five times. Don't ask me about it, my Lady;—least said is soonest mended. At all events, Sir Thomas knows more about it than I do; he'll tell you all about it: no man's bound to criminate himself," continued he, in utter despair; "and it's time enough to confess after one's hanged."

Lady Ellesmere pursued her inquiries no farther, and Mr. Marsden left her, half convinced that some insinuation against the character and

conduct of both Clara and her mother, with which Sir Thomas had been entertaining her during dinner, were not without foundation. She did not suspect Mr. Marsden, of whose honesty she had no doubt, of wilfully deceiving her, but she had no very high opinion of his penetration, and could very well understand that he might have been deceived himself, and that a sense of shame, at having suffered such an imposition to be practised upon him, might make him unwilling to enter into the subject now. Sir Thomas watched the conversation as a cat watches a mouse ; he seemed perfectly to understand what its abrupt termination indicated, a flash of triumph lighted up his features, and in the fulness of his heart and highness of his spirits, he sought Lady Sarah. " Could not you get up a quadrille, Lady Sarah ?" said he ; to which request that Lady for a few moments could only return a stare of unmitigated astonishment. If the alderman proper, haltered, the dexter supporter of her father's coat-of-arms, had descended from his post over the gateway of the castle, and made the same request, he would hardly have astonished her more.

CHAPTER XXX.

he due enjoyment of an author's labours, it is essential that he and for whose amusement he toils, should understand one another, therefore, be it known to you, most courteous and cherished that we are not at this moment, as you may possibly have to suspect, writing a book of travels, such as might be termed, an from the Dead Sea ; The Sphinx Unriddled ; Loose notes of a er ; The City of the Jordan ; The Spirit of the Red Sea ; The er in Cairo ; The Angle in the Delta ; The Wild Sports of the ins ; or whatever else might be considered that most essential ient in a book,—a striking and attractive title,—whereby to intro o the favourable notice of the public, the conglomerate of steam, leas, mules, description, transcription, imposition, composition, and ass, that ordinarily constitutes a tour in the East,—and so all with your permission consult both your convenience, and we hold also of some moment, our own, by getting over the l as quickly as possible.

shall, therefore, with this self-rewarding benevolence spare you cital of how by a supernatural readiness of reply, a more than ic firmness of demeanour, a Babylonian versatility of language, transcendental copiousness of resource, our travellers, as is the able practice of modern tourists, overcame by mere force of ter, all impracticabilities, difficulties, and impediments of travel, without sleep, days without food, deserts without water, cabins at air ; how they carried on contests of wit in unknown tongues, aided their own guides by their superior knowledge of untrodden nesses, overawed refractory authorities, coerced owners of mules amels, not less obstinate than the anima's they drove, and bur-usly entered inhospitable convents, causing unwilling monks to them up by means of baskets and windlasses, thus kicking aside, taking light of those impediments to Syrian travel, that correspond npikes, drunken postboys, heated axles, and damp beds at home.

are aware of the injustice that we do Lord de Creci, and Captain ray, as also Fritz Bluthenbaum, Effendi, and Jeremiah O'Driscoll, shi, in not dwelling on their exploits in that line, as is the proper to do, but trusting to the modesty of those illustrious person- for our forgiveness, we shall briefly pass over that part of the ey that presented no feature of personal interest to us, and ing at once in *medias res*, our next encounter with our lers will be at the gate of Jerusalem, out of which about two before sunset, we find them defiling in something not very e order of battle, or at least order of march. They had been usly informed in a spirit of great candour, by the governor of ity, that at the place to which they were going, European's blood

was considered a very valuable medicine by the men, and an invaluable cosmetic by the women, and was eagerly sought after, especially by the latter, without much regard as to the manner of obtaining it; and in consequence of this agreeable warning, they had made such arrangements as to ensure, that if it became necessary to furnish a supply of this precious kalydor from their own persons, it should be paid for in kind, and at the dearest possible rate, that is to say, that in addition to their party being tolerably numerous, every man of it was armed to the teeth. It consisted of six Europeans, the Earl and Harry, the two servants, the skipper of the yacht, who was a tolerable draughtsman, and a bit of a botanist, and whose knowledge of astronomy, along with some other odds and ends of information, that he had picked up in his career, was considered likely to be useful, and one of the crew, who having been shipwrecked in the Red Sea, had resided long enough among the Arabs to acquire a smattering of their language and habits, and besides being thus more useful as an attendant, was also a valuable check upon their interpreter. They were all mounted, and that the reader may not only know how far they were prepared for what they were to encounter, and how far what they did encounter justified their preparations, but also may learn how to equip and comport himself in similar circumstances, we shall favour him with a detailed account of their arrangements. Lord de Creci, Harry, and the skipper, carried each a light rifled carbine, a pair of over and under pistols, with spring bayonets, swivel ramrods, very long barrels, and very small bores, an uncommonly workman-like tool, that will give a pretty good account of a man at an astonishing distance, and sabres; so that to meddle with one of them, would be much about as safe and pleasant as handling a hedgehog. The other three were armed with ships' muskets and bayonets, and Scotch dirks, which, in the absence of the enemy, made very good dinner equipage. Two Arabs, one as interpreter, the other as guide, provided with their own arms and horses, completed their cavalry, whilst on foot they had six natives to look after the horses and camels. These men, though not mounted, were still well armed, so that altogether, the party was not one to be lightly provoked. Certain inconveniences having been suffered by former travellers, in consequence of too close an adherence to European costume,—as in the case of a worthy gentleman, the resemblance of whose hat to the ordinary cooking utensil of the country, had caused him to be saluted as 'the father of a cooking pot' by the voice of the people, who firmly believed that the same article of furniture that served for preparing nourishment for his interior, served also as a covering for his exterior,—it had been judged expedient with a view to attracting as little attention as possible, to adopt the dress of the country; very extensive canvass drawers, and a frock confined round the waist by a red leathern girdle, which, when required, enacted the part of pocket tolerably well, a handkerchief folded in a triangular shape, and fastened on the head with the apex behind, by a sort of woollen circlet, or rather a twisted rope of camels' hair dyed black, formed their head-dress, the points of which, hanging down behind and over their ears, almost covered the head, and their costume was completed by the Abba, the comprehensive

cloak of the country, a garment almost as inseparable from the wild man of the East, as his great coat is from the Irishman, the wild man of the west—his constant companion, by night and day, in sunshine and shower,—and the general effect of their costume was much heightened by the oriental custom of wearing the ticket on which the price of each article was marked hanging by a string, a practice which gave a light and airy appearance to the dress, such as the watch guard and eyeglass string impart to that of a European exquisite.

Bluthenbaum eyed the party as it defiled out of the gate, and wound down the hill, with a glance of military approval, “‘C’est bien arrangée,’ It is well deranged the order of march,” said he.

“Deranged,” repeated O’Driscoll, “begorra, you may say that, when you write home to your friends. I believe we are deranged, every man jack of us, as mad as hatters, goin’ about the country masquerading in this fashion. What call have we got to make believe that we are wild Indians, or rabbers, or bad weans; purty childer they are too, sweet babbies! Look at that ould chap sitting on the wather like a say-gull,” continued he, pointing to one of the guides who was perched on a camel on top of the water skins; “look at him with the pole of the tent under his foot, and all the cooking pots stuck on it, like larks on a spit; that’s mighty quare thravelling.—What’s that you’ve got in that bottle there?”

“It is the medicine,” said Bluthenbaum.

“Ah, yes, I see,” said Jerry with a wink, “mighty nate medicine, I’ll go bail.”

“It is medicine,” returned the other.

“It’s well for the sick,” said Jerry. “I’m rather poorly myself.”

“Will you taste?”

“The laste taste in life; thank you kindly, Sir,—your health,—fulh! auch! murder alive, I’m pisoned, help,—what’s that you’ve given me?”

“I told you it was medicine,” replied Bluthenbaum, calmly; “you believe me now, vous me croyez peutetre.”

“It’s bitter enough,” said Jerry, “bitters barrin the gin,—what is it at all?”

“It is an opiate, a little few of laudanum within,” returned Fritz, “to give the people, they always demand medicine, and I give them this for all complaints.”

“Ethen, does it cure them all?” asked Jerry in some astonishment.

“It cures none,” replied the other; “but it puts them to sleep, and they do not wake till after you have left the village, that contents them.”

“It’s a mighty artful dodge,” said Jerry; “much the same sort of thing as tickling a trout.”

“We have a strange scene before us,” said Lord de Creci to Harry, as they wound down the mountain’s side, in the direction of Bethlehem.—The object of their journey, it may be remarked, being to visit by fair means if possible, otherwise by force, the ruins of that singular city that dwelt in the cleft of the rock, the mysteriously closed way through the crags that formerly were Petra. “We have a strange scene before us, and one upon which those to whom the chain of evidence that

verifies the scriptures will do well to ponder; the scroll of prophecy traced in characters of granite,—giant characters that can neither be removed, effaced, decayed, or mistaken. Twenty-four centuries ago, the doom of desolation was pronounced against a city that had yet eight hundred years of prosperity before it. If the same doom had been pronounced against London at the time of the Norman Conquest, its fulfilment would not have appeared more impossible now than did the burden of Edom, but the eight centuries rolled away like one night, and the doom descended, it was recorded on the deserted rock, and the very beasts of the desert bear witness to the truth. The existence of the Jews is hardly a more direct confirmation of revelation, than the extinction of their unhospitable brethren, whose few, scattered, and savage descendants are as unwilling to this day to suffer strangers to pass through their land, as they were three thousand and more years ago."

These few words sank deep into Henry's mind, and as they pursued their ride in the cool evening, he thought and thought, sometimes confusedly, sometimes seeming to catch a train of reasoning, and again losing it in a cold gloomy labyrinth of scepticism, sometimes entertaining a momentary suspicion, that with all his clear-sightedness, and all his independence of judgment, he might have all his life been wandering about blindfolded, groping in the darkness, less because he could not open his eyes, than because he would not. Lord de Creci's observations made the more impression on him, inasmuch as though apparently addressed to him, he did not feel them directed at him, that nobleman's habit of talking to himself as if he were hardly aware of the presence of any one else was now so familiar to him, that he had become accustomed to consider the greater part of what he said as a sort of soliloquy, generally, indeed very well worth listening to, but by no means demanding or expecting a reply; and by the time they reached Bethlehem, he had made an important step in the path that Clara fondly hoped he was treading, the seed had been sown that might become a tree, his preconceived notions were shaken, and already a change was creeping over his spirit.

A fortnight passed away without any thing occurring more than the usual incidents of travel, and the early part of October found our travellers, all obstacles surmounted, close to the object of their journey, and they marched out of the gate of Shobeck, absolutely in order of battle, primed and loaded, ready for immediate action, for they had every reasonable prospect of fighting their way into, and something very like an absolute certainty of fighting it out of the rocky stronghold of Idumea. Lord de Creci had made up his mind that he would see it, that was enough for him: if peaceably, well; if not, still he would see it. The obscurity that involved its history, the peculiarity of its construction—more like a human burrow than a great, populous, and commercial city; the difficulties that had invariably attended any attempt to penetrate to it by Europeans, had roused the restless activity of his character, an activity that, as it were, smouldered under an external crust of gravity, but was yet ready to break out whenever an object presented itself that attracted his particular notice, or excited his interest; a characteristic instance of which had appeared in the ready alacrity with which he had

thrown himself into the parsonage of Dorrha when it was about to be attacked by the peasantry. Harry was not very particular as to where they went, or how they went; anything new or anything exciting was what he wanted; for he found that whenever he had nothing particular to do, he began to thing of Clara, and it was not on the whole a very agreeable subject. Jerry O'Driscoll was fully persuaded, from some obscure hints he had picked up as to the peculiarities of the place, which he arranged and interpreted according to his own experience, that they were on their way to a sort of Syrian Gibraltar, and that in the event of resistance, they were to take the place, an undertaking for which, accustomed to see mere numbers of native enemies laughed at in Indian warfare, he considered the party quite strong enough, and rather hoped there might be some houses of entertainment there, containing better liquors than those he had recently tasted; and as to Bluthenbaum, who knew a little more upon the subject, his idea was that it was a savage *Pere-la-chaise*, and that possibly his master might have in view the providing himself with a family vault there, or perhaps carrying off a stone coffin for future use, or some object of that kind of sepulchral vertu suited to his character,—a character entirely unintelligible to the worthy Alsatian, and whose hieroglyphics he had consequently long given up attempting to decipher.

The whole party proceeded on their road in high heart and spirits, and soon found themselves in a steep and rocky ravine in a southerly direction, which led to the place where they were to meet a friendly chief, who had sworn by the faith of a true believer and the honour of his women, that they should drink of the waters of the Wady Mousa, that they should pitch their tent on Mount Hor, that they should go wherever they pleased, and stay as long as they listed in the valley of Petra, and if they so pleased, as he expressed himself, should carry it away in their portfolios,—which last indulgence, it may be remarked, was attended with grave results. It was a strange sight to contrast the evidence of what *had* been, in that landscape that lay before their eyes, with the picture it presented of what it was. The road along which they wound slowly and cautiously, was constructed with great labour, artificially deepened in many places and skilfully strengthened with masonry in others, where it seemed to require support; but there were none to traverse it; the ground was terraced and parted into what had been gardens, evidently formerly cultivated with the greatest care, but centuries had rolled away since a spade had been struck into that soil; there were the remnants of watercourses, intended to distribute equally among those gardens the water of a little brook that now rolled neglected down the valley; and towns, villages, and buildings, thickly strewn over the silent ground in every direction, seemed to record a dense, active, and intelligent population, once swarming on a spot where there was not now a living creature to be seen. The road became every moment more wild and romantic; the rugged peaks of Mount Hor closed it to the southward. everywhere the seal of desolation seemed set upon that great stone valley, and at every turn of the road, it became a question whether they might not meet a foe. Hitherto certainly they had encountered no active opposition, but the situation

was by no means one of unqualified security ; true they had engaged a large body of Arabs, who were pledged to protect them, but still whether these people would risk a blood feud with the people of Wady Mousa for their sakes was a question yet to be solved.

On their arrival at the camp of these friends, a curious and characteristic debate took place between them and the Fellahs of the Wady Mousa, who bear so evil a repute that the very wandering Arabs of the desert, whose hand is against every man and against whom every man's hand is, dread to enter their territory ; negotiations had been going on for some days, without any very particular result, the inhabitants of the impenetrable city having sworn that they should not enter, and the friendly chief who had sworn that they should, having been busy making his preparations to perform his promise,—numbers of his men dropped in every hour, many armed with singular looking guns, some richly inlaid with mother-of-pearl, some with delicate silver tracery, some mounted with matchlocks, some again in the hands of the chiefs, whose well proportioned stocks, highly finished locks, and plain but serviceable appointments, announced them the presents, or perhaps the plunder of European travellers, but hardly any two were alike ; one long bearded gentleman prided himself exceedingly upon the superiority of his gun over all the others, and was much envied accordingly ; but soon after dark, his pride did not prevent his coming secretly to Bluthenbaum, to enquire into the recondite qualities of his weapon, for he had not as yet learned how to use it. Bluthenbaum, who had always hitherto been appealed to by the Arabs, as the wisest of the party, on the strength of his possessing the longest beard, as well as for the sort of imperturbable gravity with which he delivered wise sayings, narcotics, (that is literally, not typically,) payments of piastres, and point-blank refusals, here found his character for wisdom and for gravity equally endangered : he could no more help the grave owner of the enigmatical gun, than he could help laughing himself ; the fact being that it was an air-gun, the copper ball belonging to which had been destroyed ; a weapon not likely to cause much diminution of the population of the Wady Mousa.

The arrival of the Europeans brought the question at once to a crisis, the hostile tribe vowed that they should not penetrate, and mounting their horses departed in a body. The friendly sheikh felt his valour much confirmed by the formidable character of the party, who certainly had a peculiar fighting look about them, and seemed almost capable of making their way, single-handed, into whatever part of the country they thought fit ; and their imposing appearance was the greater comfort to him, insomuch as, however earnest he was in his wish to protect them, and thereby earn the immoderate recompense he had stipulated for, he dreaded any thing like an actual fight, beyond all measure ; not for any want of personal courage, for a braver warrior never drew sword ; but on account of the interminable feuds in which the death of any single man, on either side, would have involved not only himself, but his tribe, his children, and his children's children. It is a strange anomaly in the social character of the Arab, if the term social can fairly be applied to the wild man, that the very intensity of

their spirit of revenge, literally prevents bloodshed among one of the wildest populations on the face of the earth, more effectually than all the institutions of civilization do, among those nations to whom murder ought to be unknown. The duty of avenging a relative's death that devolves upon the sons of the desert, is so sacred, so imperative, so rigidly performed, and so confidently reckoned upon, that none that can help it, venture upon braving it; and the peace of the country, such as it is, is kept by its most violent passions; it is making fire eat fire; and the accession to his force, of Lord de Creci and his followers, was hailed by the old chief with the greatest delight, as making it probable that the others would not attack: he sat down to an evening meal, consisting of the greater part of a sheep, and a huge bowl of rice, in the highest spirits and appetite to correspond, and laughed heartily at the remark made upon his voracity, by one of the tribe, that his hand went into the dish like the claw of a raven, and came out like the foot of a camel.

The next morning they set forth on their road; they proceeded unmolested, but by no means unwatched; the hostile Arabs hovered in their flank, some on foot, and some on horseback, sometimes they would disappear for a time, but they ever reappeared again,—constant communications seemed going on between the chiefs, as if some sort of compromise was being entered into,—the ground became more difficult every mile they advanced, and on one occasion, when turning to the eastward, they entered a narrow and craggy ravine, at the gorge of which the cliffs approached one another more than usually close, and a small and half ruined fort on each completely commanded the road, Harry heard his servant, after eyeing the pass for some time with an expression more of distrust than admiration, say to the skipper of the schooner, "that's a mighty good imitation of a rat trap," and to say truth, he rather agreed with him. During that day's march, however, they encountered no active opposition. For purposes of security they had organized themselves into a regularly constituted military body, though modelled rather upon naval principles, being divided into three watches; Lord de Creci and Bluthenbaum forming one, Harry and O'Driscoll the second, and the skipper of the schooner and the sailor the third; the natives, who lie down to sleep in their clothes, with their arms close to them, were left to themselves; a single cry would bring them to their feet, armed to the teeth, and ready for instant battle before the utterer had again drawn breath; and thus with two Europeans always on the watch, they might defy surprise. Their encampment this evening, presented a singular contrast, as if three thousand years had rolled suddenly away from between the two races of Japhet and Shem, and brought the men of the nineteenth century in contact with the sons of Esau; on the one side was the white ornamented tent of the Earl, the polished instruments of science,—the light yet far reaching weapons of modern war,—the compact horse appointments, the luxurious travelling canteen and camp furniture, books, writing materials, and the vigilant European watching everything, with a calm, thoughtful eye, that seems to notice nothing, but that nothing escapes. All this came from an unknown island in an

unknown sea, that had not a name nor a place among the nations of the earth for centuries after there was a prince and a people, cities and highways in Edom. On the other side was a scene that Ishmael himself might have looked upon. It belonged to the times that men were hunters in the hills, and shepherds in the plains, dwellers in tents, and wanderers over the face of the land; and the careful and skilfully wrought equipment of the European, contrasted strangely with the little black tents, and rude, and scanty domestic furniture of the Arabs. A kid had been just killed, and was being cooked at a fire in the open air. Before one of the tents, two women recalled the recollection of the prophecy, "two women shall be grinding together, the one shall be taken, and the other left." They were busy with a small mill, which one could not have worked, for one poured in the grain, whilst the other turned the stone; in another place, a girl was hastily applying to the oven the simple flat cake, whose preparation is the accompaniment of the arrival of a guest; the camels, unloaded and left to shift for themselves, were foraging in different directions, without apparently much danger from repletion; shouting boys and laughing girls were driving home the somewhat unruly goats from the neighbouring valleys; wild figures were moving about in every direction; wild eyes were glancing here and there over the scene, whose character, nomadic and savage as it was, was yet almost patriarchal; and though some of the loftiest summits of the rugged and jagged mountain ranges that formed a suitable back ground to the characteristic picture, were yet lighted by the last setting rays of the sun, the calm of evening was gradually settling on that wild group. There were signs of man's wrath, though, among them, the horses were picketted, saddled, and at hand, long lances stuck in the sand by their heads, gleamed in the evening sun, arms hung ready for use at the saddle bows; and at the slightest alarm, a very few minutes would have seen that assemblage in the saddle, with the spear raised, and the sword drawn, ready for battle;—where man is, there also will war be.

The next morning they proceeded on their route, jealously watched, but still unmolested by the inhabitants of the Wady Mousa; it seemed that either those wild men had entered into some compromise with their guides, or else that they were unwilling to come to extremities with so formidable a party, for they suffered them to enter Petra without any opposition more than threats and abuse, which were not very difficult to endure, considering that few of the party understood what they meant; and they established themselves much more quietly than they had expected, in an empty tomb, which, accessible only at one point, enabled them to repel alike the curiosity of their allies, and the pilfering propensities of the others. During six days they remained here, occasionally conciliating the chiefs of the district with presents; sometimes distributing small sums as bucksheesh among the poorer Arabs; always shewing loaded pistols, and sharp swords; but on the evening of the sixth day, their friends, who had for some time expressed great impatience at the danger that their prolonged stay exposed them to, became clamorous for their departure, and even threatened if they did not move off that night, to abandon them to

their fate, and leave them in the hands of the Fellahs, which being interpreted to Harry, that gentleman gave it as his private opinion, that the Fellahs would in that case burn their fingers, and proceeded to complete a sketch he had begun, of a remarkably beautiful Corinthian temple, called the Khasnee, cut out of the solid rock with that almost incredible lavishness of labour and decoration that characterises the architecture of Petra. It was his attempting to draw this temple that had caused the commotion amongst the wild men of the rocks, which had startled the Earl's friendly natives, and induced them to press the question of departure. The Arabs, to whose minds the ordinary operations of European science are utterly unintelligible, and appear supernatural, have an idea that every European is a magician. The motives that induce these wise men from the West to undertake long, difficult, and dangerous journeys, to penetrate into deserted places, where they can hardly find a meal for a single camel, which is about their measure of value, is equally incomprehensible, and consequently the belief is universal, that they are looking for hidden treasures, and they also believe, that whenever the christian magician has ascertained the exact site where the treasure is deposited, his task is completed, he has acquired the power of commanding the genii or demon to whose care the precious deposit is entrusted, to bring it to him through the air, and place it before him in whatever part of the world he may be in. It is this opinion more or less modified, that has met, impeded, and often destroyed European travellers in their researches in those countries; and it so happened, that the natives of the Wady Mousa nourished it to the very strongest degree, on the subject of this very temple. How they got hold of the tradition, it would be probably impossible to say, but they consider that Pharaoh's tomb, as they call the Khasnee, is in reality the sepulchre of some mighty monarch of the olden time, and contains an enormous treasure, the exact place of which they imagine they have discovered in an urn that surmounts it. Few of them pass the spot without sending a bullet against this urn in the hopes of breaking it, and seeing the coveted treasure descend in a golden shower,—the true philosopher's stone transmuting lead into a purer metal,—but the balls glide off, the urn, which is probably solid, remains, a few slight splinters alone telling of the assaults to which it has been exposed, and the disappointed Arab wends on his way, muttering curses on the head of the giant who had placed this tempting prize so high, as to be out of the reach of any ladders they possess.

Our excellent friend Harry, having nearly half finished the sketch of this tomb, had about as much idea of leaving it unfinished, as of leaving his own bones in it; and having desired the interpreter to give the surrounding Arabs, with his compliments, a message which the man of language judged a great deal too defiant for the time and place, and prudently suppressed accordingly, proceeded with great gravity and coolness, to seat himself, and arrange a portable drawing table with all necessary materials, exactly in front of the building in question; an operation upon which the surrounding Arabs looked with feelings much corresponding to those with which the citizens of London might be supposed to regard a well disposed invading general establishing a

battery of ninety-six pounders within breaching distance of Saint Paul's, and at the same time detaching half a dozen ton of powder to blow up the Mint. In taking his first sketch of the (in the eyes of the natives) endangered building, he had employed a camera lucida, which had occasioned considerable discussion in the camp, some holding it to be a species of divining rod, and pointing learnedly to the site of Aaron's tomb in Mount Hor, dilated upon the fearful power a rod had in *his* hands; others again remarking something in the form of the prism, which a lively imagination might easily convert into a sort of distant likeness to a hatchet, and also observing that there were upon the tomb two figures armed with hatchets, conjectured that there must be some mysterious affinity between the instrument and the figures; and others declared that it was some diabolical machine for surveying the nether world, intended to fix the exact place of the treasure, so as to leave the demon no sort of excuse on the subject of bringing it faithfully to the surveyor, who began now to be looked on with about the same eyes, as a guager once was in this country, viz. a lawful prize to Satan. All, however, agreed in this, that it was a strange unlawful pernicious instrument, likely to do much mischief, and by no means to be suffered in so orthodox a spot as the Wady Mousa, and stood about him, at what they considered a safe distance, gesticulating violently and insisting upon his discontinuing his sketch of the Khasnee. The camera lucida being of no further use, was discarded, and did not now offend their eyes; but a small case of mathematical instruments was just as offensive; they did not understand what was going on, and that was enough to raise a mob in Asia, as well as in Europe, the same cause has always collected mobs, and does, and will do so till the time comes when the wheel turns, and instead of mobs overbearing understanding, understanding shall have put down mobs.

O'Driscoll posted as a sentry, paced gravely backwards and forwards with measured steps and arms supported, as he might have done on guard at Kilmainham, and kept the natives from coming close enough to annoy his master, but one of them, placing himself before him, between him and the temple, declared with violent gesticulations that he should draw no more; there was something in the frantic energy of this man that particularly amused our hero, he smiled slightly, and after a short time the peculiar attention with which he seemed to eye his threatener, excited in the latter the oriental terror of the evil eye, and he withdrew with some sort of superstitious fear. In passing by Harry to reach his comrades again, he unfortunately passed near enough to get a glimpse of the paper, and to his horror, saw that a most accurate full length portrait of himself occupied the foreground of the much dreaded picture.

This was beyond Arab endurance, he nothing doubted, but that it was merely the prelude to transporting *him* at the wave of an enchanter's wand to some unheard-of and incredible part of the earth, to say no worse,—some place where there were no dates and not many beards, great abundance of pork, and a short allowance of wives;—and with a yell of superstitious terror, he communicated the astounding intelligence to his comrades, who instantly converted it into a personal



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quarrel with the tribe. It is impossible to conceive the turmoil that followed this unfortunate proceeding, unless by imagining the disturbing of a nest of hornets, each six feet high, the Fellahs betook themselves to their arms directly; the drawing was of course put a stop to instantly, except in so far as it became immediately necessary to draw swords; the friendly Arabs seeing the confusion, ran hastily to the spot, and partly by their persuasions, partly by a well founded dread of meddling with well-armed Europeans, the two reached the cave in safety; but their troubles were now beginning; their allies, hearing the state of the case, declared that they could not countenance such an outrage, and went off in a body: the Fellahs swore that not one of the party should leave the Wady Mousa alive; and another half hour found the Europeans deserted by their allies, and blockaded in an empty tomb by the enraged Fellahs,—the most untameable tribe of the wildest nation on the earth.

CHAPTER XXXI.

AMIDST the various resources in and out of doors, of a country house in September, the chariot of time slipped over its course at Ellesmere as easily and pleasantly as if Vulcan himself had seen the wheels greased before it started; Bacchus held the reins, and Phaeton plied the whip over his shoulders, with Venus on the box, Diana and the Graces for inside passengers, and Apollo for a guard, blowing "Nix my dolly, pals, fake away," in the horn, at the suggestion of Cad Mercury hanging on by the hind boot; and as it rolled on, a phenomenon developed itself almost as unintelligible, and unaccountable as the shambling attempt at a comet, that the February nights made in this year of perplexity 1843. This was a conjunction, not of heavenly bodies, but of two individuals, who seemed to have about as little in common, as any two persons that could be imagined; for before Mr. Fitzgerald and Sir Thomas Horton had been very long in the house together, it became apparent that the latter had established over the former a most unaccountable influence, accompanied with a sort of deferential affection, which in the olden time, would very probably have passed for the effect of witchcraft. In this age, however, more enlightened as to cause and effect, it merely passed for the result and reward of successful cunning, though what the grim knight's object could be, nobody could divine; and the singular and ill-assorted intimacy that was springing up between them, gave rise to divers sprightly remarks of Lady Sarah's touching Little Red Ridinghood, and her respected grandmother with the large tusks; the admiration that the musical fox expressed for the crow's voice, when the worthy bird had a bit of cheese in his mouth, and unwisely esteemed solid pudding less than empty praise; the singular facility with which the cat, commonly supposed to be about as wide awake as any animal that runs, suffered her dear delicate velvet paw to be turned into a species of fire-iron by Jacko, the chesnut eater; and other mythological and zoological instances of friendship or confidence, misplaced or indifferently repaid, to which she, in her wit, or her wickedness, thought fit to liken this new edition of Damon and Pythias.

It was about a week after the interview that we have recorded as having taken place between Clara and the gypsy, that Mr. Fitzgerald accosted Sir Thomas Horton, with an expression on his countenance, partly triumphant, partly mysterious, but also partly sheepish, and partly enquiring; and demanded his advice and assistance, touching what he called a warning letter, which he had found on his dressing table. Who could have sent such a thing to Mr. Fitzgerald? and at Ellesmere too, in the heart of peaceful England. Had it been at Avonmore, indeed, it would have been quite another thing; there such gentle hints as "Prepare your coffin. Get your grave dug," and so

orth, are the indigenous produce of the soil, they are as plenty as blackberries, and excite about as much interest, though often productive of inconvenience to the parties concerned. But in England, it was quite another matter, such signatures as Captain Rock, Starlight, and so forth, were not current. Could it be Swing?

Our romantic readers doubtless remember the Wehmgericht, the hastily insurrection of the mind of old Germany against the heaviest weight that weighs down nations, the weight of unadministered law, and unquestionably before their widely extended eyes, arises the fearful summons, fastened to the table by the typical dagger, and commanding the already doomed victim to come and appear, to answer to an untated charge by an unknown accuser, before an irresponsible tribunal. Our romantic readers will, however, we regret to be obliged to remark, be wrong; on the contrary, the document, though mysterious to the initiated, and untraceable as to its origin, was rather, if anything, encouraging in its tenor, it contained simply these words:

"FAINT HEART NEVER WON FAIR LADY."

Very excellent words these are, and a very heart-warming, and enterprising adage, suited to those flowers of the earth, younger sons,—whom hard-hearted parents, and guardians, and sometimes some others, we shall not specify, hold to be born to blush unseen, (if they blush at all) and waste their sweetness on the desert air,—that is to say, barring rich uncles, stray codicils, and the like, under whose fostering influence the desert flowers forthwith become rare and cherished hothouse plants. 'Faint heart never won fair lady!' Admirably adapted is this maxim to support the spirits of such suffering innocents through the disappointments of this mercenary world. Many such have they stimulated to exertion that marvelled greatly at their own success; and Mr. Fitzgerald immediately experienced a sense of elevation, as if he was already a Mr. Madelaine Fitzgerald, or a Sir Fitzwarine Fitzgerald, or something of that sort; and he forthwith brought the mysterious document to his new friend, that the riddle might be duly read. Sir Thomas scanned the contents with his own grim and significant smile, and his own penetrating, yet impenetrable eye, and then looked for a moment fixedly upon the gentleman to whom it was addressed.

"I think I know that hand," said he.

"I cannot take it upon me to say that I do," replied Mr. Fitzgerald; "it's a very genteel hand."

"You do not know it?" asked the knight with a very knowing look.

"Indeed I don't."

"Yet you aspire to it."

"You're poking fun at me, Sir Thomas," answered the other with a comic consciousness on his face; "I don't know what you'd be at."

"Faint heart never won fair lady," repeated Sir Thomas; "it seems to me pretty intelligible; you observe it says fair lady," and he emphasised the word lady, in such a manner, as to bring an amazing quantity of modest blood into Mr. Fitzgerald's face; "real lady, and no mistake; it doesn't say, lovely virgin, or charming woman, or nice girl, or anything of that sort: no, no, it's all aristocratic—fair lady."

"Oh! for shame, Sir Thomas, you wouldn't insinuate that it was a hint of a delicate nature about any of the family; that would be too bad."

"Ah! you're a cunning dog," said Sir Thomas; "you know well enough what you are about; it wasn't to shoot partridges you came to Ellesmere,—no, no, let you Irishmen alone for affairs of that sort;—there's the dressing bell,—now for it,—go ahead,—you've a leading wind," and Mr. Fitzgerald retired to dress.

"It is a very remarkable arrangement of Providence," said Sir Thomas Horton, as the poor man went his way rejoicing; "it is a very remarkable arrangement of Providence, that notwithstanding that man is supposed to be a reasonable or rather reasoning creature, there are such a number of eternal idiots in the world. Perhaps they are sent to be the prey of the better order of men, just as the smaller fishes are put in the sea to be the prey of the larger, in fact, it is only in the hands of a superior spirit, that turns him to some account, that such a creature as this Fitzgerald is of use, or could be of use. He is incapable of doing anything of his own accord. Well, he is of use to me, which is all I need trouble my head about." Here he put up his hand to his head, and feeling it for a moment uneasily, as if something were wrong, muttered, 'I ought to have been half way to India by this time.' It would have been well for poor Clara if he had been.

"Faint heart never won fair lady!" murmured Mr. Fitzgerald, as he placed himself before the glass. "Faint heart never won fair lady! what is a faint heart? Is it a heart without a tongue? Well that isn't an Irishman's heart any how. Oh! woman, woman, you're a kind creature, you're the milk of human kindness, the cream of the earth; faith I never had much reason to complain of you. 'Faint heart never won fair lady!' says my Lady Madelaine, she must have been mighty bad when she wrote that, I'd like to have caught her leaving the note upon my dressing table;" and here he most fervently kissed the precious document, as it were shadowing forth the fate that would have awaited Lady Madelaine, had she been caught redhanded in the act, depositing this document upon Mr. Fitzgerald's dressing table, which probable event that gentleman firmly believed had taken place a few hours before. Suddenly he started, it never rains but it pours, and at this moment, his eyes lighted upon another billet-doux, a little three-cornered, highly scented, rose coloured darling, that seemed to have sprung out of the table, like a flower out of the earth, since he had been in the room; how it came there he knew not, but there it was, smelling exceedingly like a very well got up young gentleman's pocket-handkerchief, and fastened for greater security to the table, with a hair pin, and a bow of white satin ribband, that suggested unutterable things to his mind, and induced him to brush his hair directly, before he ventured to open the mysterious billet. "Potry by the powers," exclaimed he, as he read in a whining, boy-like tone, the following lines:

"When love is kind,
Smiling and free,
Love's sure to find
Welcome from me."

"Faith, that's just my way of thinking," said Mr. Fitzgerald; "when love is kind, smiling and free," here he grinned like a languishing hyæna, "that's a hint to make free with her! not exactly, anyhow, I must go to work in earnest, coax her and tease her, that's the way with them. I wish I could sing, you get lave to make eyes at them when you're singing with them; well, what comes next?"—

"But if love brings,
Heart-ache or pang,
Cares or such things,
Love may go hang."

"Love may go hang," repeated he, "aye, there never was an English-woman could have written that, that's the bit of Irish blood coming out, what's this?—eh!"—here he drew his lips into a minute circle, and preluded with a whistle, the following words:

"When to-morrow's sun is low, and the shadow of the lilac-tree is cast against the rustic retreat to which it gives its name, will *she*, who writes these lines, wait to see if love be true or a shadow."

Mr. Fitzgerald laid down the note, and began dressing for dinner incontinently. To describe his thoughts, would be about as easy as to unravel several hundred tangled skeins of silk. To describe his person as it appeared soon after, armed and equipped for dinner and conquest, or more properly triumph, the conquest having been already effected, albeit a grave responsibility, is a duty to the public that may not be neglected.

It may be objected, that although it is very true that Mr. Fitzgerald was by no means the sort of person, from whom it was to be expected that he would set the Thames on fire, solve the quadrature of the circle, pacify Ireland, catch a weasel asleep, or perform any other very remarkable impossibility, still he could hardly be supposed to be such an egregious blockhead, as to take these precious productions for a mode of shewing her preference for him, adopted by Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine, but it nevertheless was so; he firmly believed it, for it is to be remembered, that of all the fools that drivel on the face of the globe, there is not one afflicted with such a density of blindness as the fool, whose folly is vanity. Silly people there are, that see the external world, as through a glass darkly, others see things distorted and twisted; to some all things are pink, to some black, to some blue, to some yellow; others see all objects upside down, many see things unduly magnified, or unduly diminished; we all see through the glass more or less indistinctly, but the vain fool does not see through it at all; for the glass is to him a mirror, and presents nothing but the image of himself. It is, perhaps, a melancholy consideration, but it would be well if there was nothing more melancholy than folly under the sun, it is not unmixed sadness, for there is something harmless as well as something ludicrous in the self-absorption of vanity. Unhappily, however, there is another self-absorption in the variegated world, a curse to all that come in contact with it, a tenfold curse to the unhappy victim of whose mind it has made capture, and which, in this instance, was but employing vanity for its own diabolical purposes, and that was the self-absorption of vindictive malice.

However, Mr. Fitzgerald is at his toilette, a grave task for one who rests his fortune in life upon the set of his clothes, as he evidently felt, for one whole hour did he allot to it; that is to say, three quarters to the practical part of it, the dressing, and one quarter to the speculative, i. e. the admiring himself dressed; resolving himself killing, and wondering whether it was possible to effect any improvement upon the incarnated perfection of his appearance. He then shook his head in despair, a kind of triumphant despair; nature and art had alike lavished their resources upon him, and were alike exhausted; anything more would be to gild refined gold, to paint the lily, to add a bouquet de something to the violet, he could not discover a speck, a flaw, or fault; he smiled and murmured, "That's it."

Truly Mr. Fitzgerald was elaborately got up. We have already in a former chapter alluded to the manner in which that worthy gentleman had proposed to impart an intellectual character to his head, by shaving a sufficient quantity of the hair about his forehead, as to give that organ the height, breadth, and massiveness that he judged it ought to have, to do justice to the brain to which it acted as a screen; but still, not being quite certain that women fall in love with intellect, for its own sake alone, when absolutely unaided by personal charms, he had not neglected the adornment of those locks that he judged prudent to retain. Upon these, a profusion of oil had effected the improvement that that liquid is said to produce upon the billows in a storm, smoothing and satinizing as it were the rugged crests of the seas, and converting their abrupt declivities, and jagged and broken summits, into a soft graceful way outline, that reflected every ray of light like a horse chesnut recently escaped from its husk. Not even a well waxed mahogany table, could have equalled the burnished beauty of that shining head; it appeared as if its owner really expected that its attractions would be so great as to call forth in Lady Madelaine's mind, an irresistible desire to pat it. Nor was the rest of his person more neglected, his neckcloth could not be said to be tied, it was engineered, it was architectural, it was sculpturesque, so accurately did it follow the laws of proportion, that it more resembled some curiously composed figure of a Chinese puzzle, whose lines and angles are like the laws of the Medes and Persians, immutable, than the uneven and irregular interlacing of cambric of the nineteenth century.

The diamonds that composed his studs were brilliants of the first water, for they were but splinters struck off the first gem of the sea; his waistcoat was poplin, anglise tabinet, a garment of many colours, which derived additional lustre from being bordered with a clearly feminine embroidery, that gave it a suspicious appearance, as if it were more a trophy than a waistcoat, and could a tale unfold of former conquests, which all the world and especially his wife, knows very well form the best possible introduction to future ones. Ill natured people indeed said that something very like stays lurked under these brilliant flowers of embroidery, but that is hardly credible, perhaps indeed a belt,—men do such strange things, when they are in love,—however it is no business of ours. His watch guard we leave to the imagination of our readers; Lord Mayors, Sheriffs, and such municipal authorities

may furnish them with some slight idea of its proportions; but his shoes, there was the strong point, so intense was their brilliancy, that the idea of their being really blacked never occurred to any body, it seemed as if he had been shod with diamonds or ladies eyes, and that very tightly, or at the least that they had been smeared with a carbonised and volatilized essence of sunbeams, or steeped in moonlight, as the poets say; and thus armed and equipped, he sailed into the drawing room, as some gallant frigate enters a foreign port, or rather as a fireship, resembling in exterior appearance and rig one of the ordinary roamers on the ocean, but in whose comprehensive and inflammatory interior lurk concealed all manner of explosive and combustible materials, slumbering indeed, but ready to burst out into a flame, at the very mention of such a thing as a match.

It in no way consists with the design of our present history, to follow Mr. Fitzgerald through all the antics into which he was led by the grotesque idea that he had succeeded in carrying off the heart of Lady Madelaine. The discreet reader will acquire a much better idea of the sort of thing that (*mutatis mutandis*) went on at Ellesmere for some time after this, by reading the Twelfth Night, than by any thing he is likely to meet with in these pages, and to it we refer him, the more so as the courteous public, were we to attempt a description of Mr. Fitzgerald's pseudo-courtship, would most undoubtedly declare, through its many discordant organs, that that description, howsoever differing, was larcenously, not to say feloniously borrowed or stolen, from the misadventures of Malvolio; so upon the whole, it will be probably best for both parties, more especially the reader, to go at once to the fountain head, and read Shakspeare undiluted. Honesty is the best policy after all, especially when it saves trouble. It may be sufficient to say, that the next evening, about six o'clock, Mr. Fitzgerald approached Lilac Villa, with a delicious doubt upon his mind, whether he was to meet a messenger or messengeress, from Lady Madelaine, or to meet her adorable self in person. With many men, the impression that such a meeting was at hand, would have produced a nervous uneasiness that would have caused them to survey the house from a distance, for a short space before approaching it, would have given a cast of anxiety to their countenances, of uncertainty to their footsteps, would have moved them to spell over the Lilac Villa once or twice, with great deliberation, and possibly even to walk round the building that bore that arboricultural title, once or twice before venturing to encounter the interview that was lurking in its recesses,—but no such weakness affected Mr. Fitzgerald; on the contrary, the pride of success, that raised its curly head in his mind, was materially enhanced by the consideration that that success, considering that his fortune was not very large, and he was not the head of his house, nor even a lord at all, must necessarily be entirely owing to his own merit, his own beauty, his own talents, or some other attractive property exclusively appertaining to him, and him alone, as indeed any one of those three insinuating qualities we have mentioned most certainly would, seeing that the rest of the world could not claim as much as the right (so called) of discovery in them. So buoyed up with this feeling, he no sooner came within sight of the

cottage, then he smiled benignly on himself, displaced several hairs in his right whisker, drew himself up to his full height, brought his cane to that position that is known in military parlance as carrying swords, and pushing his chest out as far as it would go, marched straight to his point. A thundering knock at the door, was, after some little bustling and scuffling inside, duly answered, and Mr. Fitzgerald disappeared.

Scarcely had he entered, before Sir Thomas Horton quitted the friendly shelter of a neighbouring hedge, with a loud burst of triumphant laughter. "Good! Good! Good!" shouted he almost frantically, "now the trap has closed upon both, both, both,—aye, safe, safe,—and in ten minutes that poor fool Marsden must be here,—ha, ha, ha. Years have rolled away, men have passed away, children have grown and withered, but I have remembered and waited—waited—waited.—Eh! what! who is that drunken brute that is going into the cottage."

CHAPTER XXXII.

WE must now return to the scene of horror, in which the unhappy Hastings was the principal actor in New Zealand.

"Stopped your chattering, my boy," said the murderer with a diabolical sneer, as the last quiver settled into the stillness of death upon the limbs of his victim, and the deadened eye became nothing but a partly transparent ball, and no more; life was to look through it not once again for ever.

"Stopped your chattering," repeated he, as if to reconcile himself to the act, by repeating and repeating the advantage gained by it; "'dead dogs don't bark.'—Hollo, who's that?"—and he looked eagerly around, fearfully and yet savagely, for already the awful fecundity of crime, the fruitful parent of many more, of a grim family likeness, was at its terrible work within him, he heard or fancied he heard a rustling in the bushes, and grasping his tomahawk yet tighter, looked round and trembled, but was ready to slay once more.

The largest wild animal in New Zealand is a common rat, such a one might have stirred in the bushes; he cast anxious glances in every direction, nothing met his view, there was not a sound to be heard. Alone with the dead, the undiscovered slayer had nought to fear from the hand of man, there was none to suspect, none to accuse, none to testify, none to doom, man was and must remain voiceless, and un-avenging; true, the blood of the murdered cried out for vengeance, but its accents were not heard on the earth; they had already reached their fitting tribunal, and were silent, recorded, unchangeable, and eternal. All danger seemed quelled with the life that was just trampled out, but a shudder passed over the strong man's limbs, and a cold sweat broke out over his iron frame from head to foot; already the small still voice whispered in his ear, and there was no answer.

For ten minutes he stood with his arms folded, looking fixedly on his victim. It is not immediately that the conviction of the fact,—of a deed done and not to be recalled, of a change wrought that cannot be restored, of a soul parted that returns no more,—establishes itself in the mind, the heart is in rebellion against the head, and will not admit for a while the conviction against which its own feelings revolt, as at the confluence of two rivers, their waters roll for a space, together yet separate, but at last mingle; the mind at first rejects what the perception admits, but it cannot last long; the stern reality pursues its course, and pushes hope and imagination and doubt, awe, and fear, and maddening sorrow, and late repentance, alike roughly aside, and we know that what has been done, has been done.

The spot where this took place, was close to what, in that thinly inhabited country, was considered a much frequented path,—if path it could be called, which was little more than a track through the forest,

rather marked by the breaking off of the lower branches of the wood, and the trampling of men's feet, than traced or constructed by the work of men's hands ; such as it was, it was, however, too public a spot to leave the body, and Hastings accordingly looked round for a place to hide it in, and for some time looked in vain.

It is wonderful how difficult it is to hide the body of a murdered man. Human ingenuity, assisted by diabolical cunning, has been ransacked for centuries, with but little success ; the calm preparation of vengeance spreads its snares with a pitiless patience, the unerring demon guides to the prey, and then abandons his ensnared employer to axe and cord. The ruffian robber tramples upon all laws, human and divine, but is struck down by the arm of Justice, red-handed, on the very corpse of his victim ; the dead drags the living down to the tomb, and will not relax the grasp of retribution ; the maniac will slay, his unearthly cunning aids his hellish craving, and conducts him over obstacles almost impassable to the ghastly object of his inscrutable impulse, but there it leaves him ; he cannot conceal the act, he cannot hide the body ; the tainted air calls attention to the mouldering corpse, the earth will not cover it, water repels it, fire betrays it, the elements seem leagued against the murderer, they will not be parties to the temple violated, to God's image marred by man. It is a strange page, and written in characters of blood by a mighty hand in the records of Hell.

Hastings at last dragged the body to a copse about fifty yards distant, where the brushwood was unusually thick, hoping that in the luxuriance of the vegetation, he might be able there to find a tolerable hiding-place, nor was he altogether disappointed ; with some labour he succeeded in forcing it into the centre of a mass of underwood, and lacing the boughs over it, and adding some fresh ones that he lopped off with his tomahawk, to screen it yet more effectually, he walked gloomily away, and never once looked behind him, but he left not the body alone ; for scarcely had the murderer departed from the spot, and disappeared in the distance, or rather in the thickness of the forest, when a native emerged cautiously from a place of concealment, from which he had watched the whole course of the murder, and stealthily approached the corpse ; he eyed it with a wolfish expression, that sat strangely and horribly on the countenance of a human creature, he carried the never-failing Merai, he grinned as he twined the dead man's hair round his fingers, and the next instant the severed head remained in his hand,—nor did the swarthy savage rest there. We shall pursue the scene no longer, the tempest of human passions is awful enough, but the fiendishness of the cannibal is unfit for human eye or human ear.

Hastings returned to his ship, nor did any one imagine that anything out of the usual course of events had happened to him. Moody, variable, and strange, as his manner always had been, a little more moodiness, change, or oddness, attracted no notice. Lester was missed certainly, some few of the crew indulged in speculations about his fate ; some said he had bolted as they called it, but upon enquiry it was found that he owed nobody any money, so that supposition was discarded ; some said he had been murdered by the natives, which was





likely enough ; while others again affirmed that he had drowned himself in a fit of delirium tremens. which was also likely enough ; some of his particular friends conjectured that he had been given up by the chiefs to some King's ship, that might have chanced to have entered the Bay of Islands, as an escaped transport, which, considering the usual character of the English population of New Zealand in 1830, was also by no means improbable. But the main point having been ascertained, viz. that he owed no money among the ship's crew, those gentlemen troubled their heads little more about his fate, and he might as well never have existed, for any recollection of him that remained on board the Albatross, save only in the breast of one, to whom that recollection was already a hell.

Time wore on, and every day the space between the hatchway of the vessel and the mass of timber and flax beneath diminished and diminished, as the cargo she was taking on board filled the hold ; the other portion of her lading, to which we have already alluded,—a portion less disgraceful to the cupidity of the trader who dealt in it, than to the indulgence of a depraved and unnatural curiosity in the purchasers,—the highly civilised, intellectual, christian purchasers, in whose eyes a fellow creature's head ranks with a china vase, or a plaster monster,—had also been brought on board, and carefully packed in deal boxes, with sawdust and other proper precautions. The natives, as the departure of the ship drew nigh, pressed more and more eagerly to share the good things (in their eyes) that she was distributing, viz. muskets, powder, spear-heads, hatchets, and whatever else could assist in destroying human life. The crew worked with a will to prepare for their voyage, the prospect of soon having the ship's head set towards home, nerved their arms and loosed their tongues ; some sung the praises of certain Wapping beauties, whilst others had soft feelings in the neighbourhood of Blackwall ; some looked forward to the pleasures of receiving their long arrears of pay, whilst others thought principally of how they might get rid of them ; some few had mothers and sisters, and were not ashamed to think a little about them every now and then, though they did not judge it altogether expedient to make them the subjects of conversation among their messmates. One declared that this voyage once over, he would moor himself in a snug berth somewhere near Gravesend, and tempt the sea no more ; whilst another, whose home was at Ambleside, whence he had run away in connection with the cruelty of a Cumberland beauty, had a vision of a snug cottage with a flagstaff on the banks of Derwentwater, with a fairy fleet on the lake, by whose skippers he, in virtue of his saltwater experience, expected to be hailed Commodore ; whilst others again, who did not like to see their friends extravagantly happy, persisted in reminding each of those who indulged in the pleasures of hope, that in order to reach the aforesaid pleasures, they had first to double Cape Horn, which they affirmed, with great truth, was no joke at all, but very serious, tempestuous, cold, wet, hard-working, and little sleeping earnest.

So it was, but, nevertheless, the Horn was on the road home, and was spoken of as irreverently as if it were merely the sign of a public house. The men stood stoutly up to their work as the ship neared the

dreaded Cape ; day by day the weather grew colder, warmer clothing was brought out, and every preparation made for encountering the ice of the southern hemisphere, which they were rapidly approaching ; and in a few weeks more they saw the first iceberg, its huge mass drifting heavily before the wind, its ragged outline swaying majestically backwards and forwards, with a stately slowness, the crust of white spray and foam about its base, abruptly changed to the deep blue that composed its mass, which towards its summit melted gradually away into the colourless transparency of crystal, whilst ever and anon heavy groans would come booming over the surface of the waters as if some ocean giant were imprisoned in its vaulted caverns, and again a loud crack like the crashing of thunder near at hand, seemed to threaten the dissolution of the glittering palace of the Frost. It was a magnificent sight, accompanied by befitting sounds, but the Ice King did not fail to exact his tribute for the passage through his realms, for there are few times more trying to a crew, than when they are in these high latitudes, — constant vigilance, constant readiness for action is requisite, meals are interrupted, sleep disturbed, warmth unattainable, all hands on deck for hours and hours, their clothes are stiff with ice on deck, which the close heated air of the fore-castle only melts but cannot dry ; fingers that are already numbed with the cold, have to handle ropes that are frozen into long and apparently endless icicles ; as ice appears on one bow or the other, the ship must tack or wear instantly, and whilst the necessity of despatch is greatest, the difficulties of doing any thing quickly are increased three-fold, for every rope is frozen as hard as if it were a spar, every sail is as stiff as if it were nothing but a sheet of sheathing copper ; as the yards swing round, they come hard and heavily about, creaking and crackling as if the rigging were being wrenched asunder : — but amidst all this hardship, and labour, and danger, Hastings seemed to find comfort, the excitement and occupation probably relieving his mind from dwelling on the thoughts that were tearing it to pieces, and even that hardy crew would wonder at the iron constitution, and unflinching hardihood that supported their second mate through as much work as the best two men in the ship.

However, this was not to last for ever, the sun rose and the sun set, and some way was made, and the sun set and the sun rose, and yet more way was made, she lost on one tack, and she gained on another, but still she got easting, she advanced slowly but still she advanced, and at last one bright clear morning it rose upon an horizon that was no longer one waste of waters unbroken save by ice ; a few rugged desolate rocks were to be seen on the larboard bow, and as they slipped gradually away on the quarter, all men on board knew that they were to the eastward of Cape Horn. By the time the evening watch was set the great point was gained, they had done with ice and its troubles, for the Albatross was steering north-east by east. She had fairly turned the corner, their progress was now steady, and they rapidly found the effects of the increasing heat, as they carried on every sail she could bear to the northward ; but Hastings relapsed into a state of moody sullenness, whence nothing seemed capable of rousing him ; he had little to do and he did it ill, and about the latitude of the West Indies a circumstance occurred that seemed almost to paralyse his mind.

It was one of those dark, damp, warm, oppressive nights that so depress the energies, a light breeze had blown from the south-west, during the first watch, but had gradually died away, till at midnight the sails flapped idly against the masts, and the ship lay motionless on the sullen water. Something was manifestly coming, the *feel* of the weather would have told that, even if the suddenfall in the barometer in the captain's cabin, had not announced a storm at hand; whence it was to come no man knew, but all that could be done was done; sail after sail was taken in, and as Hastings was employed in furling the main-sail, he chanced suddenly to look up, and exactly above his head, saw a pale ball of light quivering upon the top-gallant mast-head. He had certainly seen this sort of meteor once before. The "*corpus sancti*" is nothing new to sailors, but it is also by no means indifferent to them, it is regarded either as a sign or an omen: if it mounts in the rigging, it promises fair weather, if it descends, they must look out for squalls; but the unhappy man, upon whose face its ghastly light is thrown, is deemed by his comrades a doomed man. Hastings, though well aware of this superstition, *had* been above it, but it was otherwise now; there is no more powerful superstition than that of which guilt is the parent—he shuddered as he saw it—but when it shifted its situation, and appeared to perch for a moment on the end of the fore-top-gallant-yard, descending as it were, by steps, towards the place where he was, he fairly gave in, and went down upon deck in a paroxysm of guilty apprehension, that belongs only to those who have shed their brother's blood. Gloomy, however, as his meditations might be, there was no time for them, or any other: scarcely had the meteor disappeared, and the muttered speculations of the men, as to what the "*corposant*," as they called it, might bode, ceased, ere a few large heavy drops of rain called the attention of all on board, to what was coming; the darkness closed blacker and thicker on the ship; it was a darkness that might literally be felt; the low muttering of distant thunder was heard, accompanied by some pale flashes of lightning, and answered by a light flapping from aloft, as the topsails, the only sails that had been left standing, were lifted by a stray puff of wind, and fell again heavily to the mast. It was an appalling stillness, and stout hearts quailed under an influence that no sight nor sound of horror can surpass,—the influence of silence and darkness.

The storm burst: a broad glare of light dressed the clouds and the ocean in one lurid sheet of glittering ghastliness, the thunder pealed in a tone that seemed as if it would shake the framework of the stout ship to pieces, the rain descended in drops, whose very *weight* might actually be felt, the topsails filled as if they would be blown out of the bolt-ropes, the ocean seemed lashed into a grisly foam, the clouds rolled together, over and over, as if gigantic rocks were being hurled about the heavens, striking fire from their echoing sides, as they mingled and tumbled in the deafening chaos of the elements; the vessel seemed abandoned on the sea, a mark for all the thunderbolts of heaven, that were traversing the skies in countless numbers and trackless directions; all was silence on board, the men stood at their stations, every one of them wet to the skin, holding on by the rigging in moody idleness,

no bells were struck, no orders were given, no questions were put, the wheel was relieved in silence, not a rope was touched, not a sail was shifted, for the storm had taken the charge of the sea into its own hands, and there was nothing to be done, but to keep her head before the wind. For four hours this terrible scene continued, but though the wind and waves were deafening, and the ship creaked and groaned fearfully, the unhappy Hastings heard them not, all that turmoil was disregarded,—but a still small voice whispered in his ear,—and the sound of the storm was light, and of small moment compared with it.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

"WHERE is she?" whispered Mr. Fitzgerald, with great earnestness, and no little smirking, as he entered Lilac Villa.

"Hush!" said the landlady, "she's not come yet."

"Them as ventures may win," oracularly remarked a gypsey who sat by the fire, eyeing the happy lover with a grin of encouragement, "them as don't venture can't expect to win."

"Faith, that's true," said Mr. Fitzgerald, with some little uneasiness in his manner, for he did not by any means like the word venture, which was not at all the sort of thing he came there for; "that's true enough; you're a wise woman, you've got your wits about you."

"It would go hard with me if I hadn't," replied the crone, "it's little else I have to live upon."

"'Ethen, I don't think there's much danger of your starving," observed the gentleman.

"Not much, my son; there are fools born every hour," was the cool reply: "shew me your palm."

Mr. Fitzgerald held out his hand as he was told.

"Cross it with silver."

The gentleman did so, without much considering how he was illustrating the doctrine she had laid down, touching the probability of her starving, and the gypsey, for some time, gazed earnestly at the hand, studying the lines thereupon indented, and muttering some undertoned doggerel to herself, such as,

"Many a line
Doth here entwine
Fortune's fretwork,
In future's network
Love has crosses,
Gains have losses."

"Well mother, what do you see there; is there *any* luck in store for me?" asked the gentleman with a grin, as much as to say, 'what can the future offer to me, who enjoy the highest good fortune at the present moment.'

"You are born under a lucky star," returned the gypsey, scanning his face with her cunning black eyes, "you are in love with a lady that sighs for you, but you will never break your heart for her; you will have trouble soon, but it will soon cease; you will make a journey before three days, but you will find rest at last in the haven of marriage, and have nine children to comfort your old age."

"Sure, my cowboy has that much," said Mr. Fitzgerald, "is that all I'm to have?"

"Patience, my son," said the gypsey, none of us know what may befall us, or what an hour may bring forth,"—an observation, which, abstractedly strictly true in itself, was most especially so in this particular instance; indeed, if Mr. Fitzgerald had known what a quarter of an hour would bring forth, it is more than probable that he would have departed, escaped, fled, and broke out of Lilac Cottage, in a style that Catiline could hardly have rivalled, when he made his celebrated bolt, as the next minute the uncertainty of fortune began to develop itself in the shape of a tremendous knocking at the door. We must here advert to one point in the private history of Lilac Villa, a point of material consequence to all who happened at any time to be under its roof, and which our discerning readers have probably begun, if not to perceive, at least to suspect, and that was, its moral character was not such as would bear any very strict investigation, or indeed any investigation whatever. The good lady of the house was a married woman; she had married many years ago to escape from the tyranny of a father, who beat her whenever he was drunk, which was generally every Saturday night, and as it would seem, jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire, for her husband also beat her whenever he was drunk, with, however, this material difference, that he was generally drunk; for, between the proceeds of the disreputable traffic she carried on at home, and a species of nocturnal warfare he carried on against the game abroad, they earned enough money to indulge themselves in any luxury that they particularly fancied. Now his particular fancy was to get exceedingly drunk, and the period when his drunkenness did not superadd to that the further enjoyment of beating her, was, when he was dead drunk.

Upon this occasion, therefore, through seeing the necessity of keeping him out of the way, she had sent him out some hours before, with upwards of thirty shillings in his pocket, with a view of ensuring his attaining that interesting state of innocence, that dignified state of repose in which he could do no mischief, like a lamb as he was, or rather ought by this time to have been; for, unhappily, having found a small, though not perhaps, select knot of his boon companions, and being of a collective, or gregarious, drunken disposition, he had already spent it without expending himself, and was now returned clamorous for more money, and just sufficiently intoxicated to be ready for any mischief or quarrel that Old Nick might have provided for his benefit. The women looked uneasily at one another; it was quite clear that his arrival would interfere with their projects most materially.

"He's up to anything, from chuck-farthing to manslaughter," said his wife to the gypsey; "stow the cove away in the closet, whilst I open the door; he'll mill the glaze if I don't stir my stumps."

"Here I'm coming, you bloody fool," as a thundering kick threatened to burst in the panel.

"Come, be alive," said the gypsey, addressing herself to Mr. Fitzgerald, who stood with his mouth and his eyes alike open, wondering at the unintelligible language, and unintelligible scene with which he was surrounded. "Come along I say, and don't stand staring there like a stuck pig," and Mr. Fitzgerald followed her mechanically, not without

some disagreeable images of personal danger to himself, such as connected themselves with the word venture, which she had used a few minutes before, and the next instant he was safely stowed away in a small black dingy closet off the pantry, his companions being a mop, a pail of dirty water, some onions, a very suspicious looking gun, and a quantity of sticks of sulphur, the use of which he did not understand, but which Lord Ellesmere's gamekeeper could have readily explained to him, were employed to hold lighted under the pheasants in the trees at night, till the vapour stupefies them and they drop from their perches,—there are few things that an ingenious turn of mind, cannot turn to some use or other.

This was all that his first hasty survey of the contents of the closet made him aware, but as his eyes got more accustomed to the darkness he found that there were some other objects, one, which from his first touch of it he supposed was a lady's muff, raised no end of phantasies in his mind; it is impossible to say what amount of vagrant ideettes may spring from the prolific idea of a lady's muff, but the discovery that it was only a dead hare, dispelled them; and then another article of furniture attracted his notice, this was a small but thick curtain, or more properly screen, it being in fact a piece of an old hat, hung loosely upon the wall close to the hare, as it yielded to his touch, a slight gleam of light shot in, and upon pushing it aside he discovered that it screened a small opening that commanded a view of a room far superior in decorations and general appearance to any he had seen before, or indeed, to any that he had thought it likely that humble and apparently much neglected cottage could be expected to contain. But the room was but the casket, the gem attracted his notice, for by the table sat a female form in an attitude of intense anxiety, listening to the clamour and confusion that was going on in the next room, and evidently much terrified, at least if a trembling which was visible even to Mr. Fitzgerald, could be taken as a proof of terror. Her face he could not see, but her appearance was so decidedly aristocratic, that, judging that the simplicity of her attire was carefully studied for the occasion, he came at once to the conclusion that he looked upon Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine.

Scarcely had this idea flashed upon his mind, before another arose to correspond, viz. whether in the course of the ensuing melee and general action, which he thought likely to take place under the walls of Lilac Villa, he might not in some manner so distinguish himself in her eyes, as to appear in the character of a preserver or rescuer from imminent danger, and thereby acquire a claim upon her lasting gratitude, &c. &c. &c., that might be turned to some account.

Who will now say that there was not heroism in Mr. Fitzgerald?—to be sure, this boiling up of chivalry was immediately in a manner chilled by certain considerations of prudence: he had observed from the fear displayed by both the women, that they expected something very terrible, and not aware that what they really were afraid of was the violence not the prowess of the new comer, he concluded that he must be some very truculent champion, to engage whom in single combat would be an enterprise of great peril; then he thought of Lady

Madelaine's eternal gratitude and something more, and that by a natural transition suggested to him, that he had often heard that those who interpose in matrimonial quarrels do frequently thereby effect rather more than they in their benevolence intended, seeing that they do not uncommonly bring about a reconciliation so complete and perfect, as at once to unite the two belligerents once more into one, in a violent assault upon the intruder, poetically expressed by the immortal Butler—

They who in quarrels interpose,
Do often get a bloody nose.

Now of all the blood that has been shed by lovers, and what is much more, all that has been offered to be shed, there is no record of blood from the nose being taken as the outward sign and token of the fidelity within ; upon this Mr. Fitzgerald reflected and considered, until, as is commonly the case, in most matters we have been concerned in, and indeed, in the affairs of the world generally, the matter settled itself ; and judging not without some shew of reason, that he might, whatever might happen, exercise his own discretion in either remaining still for the sake of security, or coming forth for the sake of glory,—provided that the aforesaid glory were accompanied with some actual and existent profit to himself ;—he remained perfectly quiet, watching the mysterious damsel who still sat unmoved at the table.

The disturbance now became furious, the women, though frightened at first, soon recovered, and were not to be debarred the use of their tongues ; the man from swearing at and abusing them, seemed inclined to proceed, *par voie de fait* ; he had become not only savage, but what in Irish English, is called 'contrary,' and not content with some money he had compelled his wife to give him, he insisted upon seeing who was in the parlour ;—a proceeding to which the good lady would by no means consent, affirming, and with some reason, that her business was a strictly confidential one ; and finally he attempted to force his way into the room, and, in doing so, struck the wife of his bosom a blow in the breast that laid her flat on her back.

"You white-livered thief," roared the prostrate dame, "none but a b—y coward would strike a woman ; what right have you to come bullying here, you drunken blackguard ? who are you ? you don't kill a pig once a week ; I never seed your name in the noose-papers."

"Who dug up old Jones's body, and sold it to the surgeon ?" chimed in the gypsy ; "who stole dame Burton's chickens last Sunday night ?" This accusation somewhat staggered the subject of it, for it was true, as the gypsy well knew ; the fact being, that the worthy gentleman had anticipated the good lady herself by only a few minutes, she having appeared at the farm yard, with similar views, just as he was departing with the spoil ; and the savage look with which he turned upon her, seemed to express so clearly the desire on his part to silence her evidence by a peculiar process of the pressure of fingers on the wind-pipe, that it startled even her for the moment : "Don't look at me that way," said she, "don't come near me, you cut-throat."

"I would'nt touch either of you with a pair of tongs, you couple of

ugly old hags," returned the man, and the feminine storm now rose to a perfect hurricane. The lady on the floor started to her feet, and armed herself with a broom, the gypsy betook herself to a staff, which she was in the habit of carrying, and both together were preparing a desperate onslaught upon the audacious wretch, who had ventured to speak thus disparagingly of their personal charms, when the attention of the passers-by was attracted by the hideous clamour and screams of murder, with which the women met some feeble attempts at self-defence made by the object of their joint rage, and several people at once rushed into the cottage,—among these were Sir Thomas Horton and Mr. Montague Marsden.

The presence of these two gentlemen restored an irregular kind of order for the moment, but though blows were suspended, a storm of mutual vituperation still raged. The women, inveighing against the ruffian who ventured to strike a woman, the man employing the intervals that he could spare from trying to staunch the blood from divers scratches, in suitable replies,—until suddenly,—whether he had seen the worthy Mr. Fitzgerald enter, or whether it was merely the creation of his drunken brain,—he declared that the women had introduced a man into the house, who had conspired with them to rob him and carry off all his goods, and leave him on the parish. This produced a silence for the moment. Mrs. Gubbins had good reasons of her own for not wishing the house to be searched, and a proposition from Sir Thomas Horton to that effect alarmed her exceedingly; for not being in the whole secret, she was afraid that the discovery of her visitors, might, in some degree, compromise the payment that she was to receive through the gypsy. She tried a fainting fit first, which produced about as much effect upon the bystanders, as the fall of any other article of domestic furniture might have done; the gypsy who might be supposed to take some interest in her fate, recognizing her employer in Sir Thomas, was fully occupied watching him, and endeavouring to make out what he intended her to do next,—and her husband was accustomed to that sort of thing. Sir Thomas looked carelessly round and round.

"Where do you think the thief is concealed?" said he,—the gypsy thinking now that she had caught his meaning, gave a significant glance at the door of the parlour, which the man by chance intercepted, and fancying from it, that the vague accusation he had brought forward out of mere savage wantonness, might nevertheless have some foundation in truth, suddenly rushed into the room, and in another moment returned,—dragging out Clara Hastings.

All were thunderstruck at this:—Mr. Marsden groaned as he looked at her, the suspicions expressed by Lady Ellesmere at once occurred to his mind, and with them came the idea that they were not altogether without reason. Sir Thomas looked calmly on with a smile of fiendish triumph, and poor Clara, ignorant as yet of the equivocal situation she was in, and its consequences, sought protection at once from Mr. Marsden. At this moment a loud scream was heard from the pantry: "Help, help,—murder, man-traps, and spring-guns," and the next moment out limped the unfortunate Mr. Fitzgerald, who, in the start

he gave, at the sudden appearance of the drunken man in the room, which he supposed contained Lady Madelaine, had inadvertently put his foot in a rat-trap, which instantly pinned him after the fashion of rat-traps.

Even Mr. Marsden could hardly help laughing at the figure this new performer in the scene presented ; but it was too serious a matter to laugh at ; he knew that whatever the real state of the case was, it must most seriously affect Clara's prospects in life, and it is to be remarked, that though Mr. Marsden possessed to the full as much as his neighbours, the easy generosity that would prompt him to do a good natured thing, if it came in his way, he by no means possessed that strength of mind, and steadiness of disposition, that would ensure his standing stoutly by a friend in trouble. He found Clara in a position in which appearances were most seriously, and indeed to her, dangerously against her, and the reasoning that would have occurred to a higher order of mind, viz. that there must be some mistake, or some deception, *because* his knowledge of Clara's character assured him that she was incapable of committing the action in which she was to all appearance detected, the granting a secret meeting in a disreputable house to Mr. Fitzgerald, was above his grasp. He could, indeed, himself have pardoned her as a guilty person, and sued her pardon from others, but to stand up stoutly for her innocence, which was the sort of assistance she was in want of at the time, was precisely what he was utterly unequal to ; he had not sturdiness of purpose, nor sufficient reliance in his own judgment, nor even his own knowledge of her for such a course, and thus it was that at the very moment that she, poor girl, was falling a victim to machinations so diabolical and so unaccountable, that any one who had been aware of the true state of the case would have been naturally inclined to doubt the sanity of their contriver,—at the very moment, when assistance, support, and advice, were of the most vital importance, she found that the person from whom she most naturally expected them, the friend of her youth, who had recommended her to the notice of the family, was unequal to the task. It not to be supposed that the story was suffered to lie dormant ; even before dinner time Lady Ellesmere's opinion was conveyed to Mr. Fitzgerald, that the discovery of the attempt to intrigue with Lady Emily's governess, would probably make his stay at Ellesmere painful to him, and produced,—notwithstanding his protestations of his and her entire innocence, which her Ladyship, a cool and practical woman of the world, received with urbanity, as matters of course,—the desired effect of his immediate departure from the castle ; and, indeed, something more, for it is a matter well worth the attention of those philosophical minds who are fond of tracing effects to their causes, that it also produced a complete revulsion in his political opinions, and from being a stout hard-bitted Orangeman, he became a follower of Mr. Daniel O'Connell, and is at this moment clamouring horribly for the Repale. Soon after dinner, Clara, who now partly understood the state of the case, and terrified, and astounded, lay on her bed in a state of both mental and bodily exhaustion, received a summons to attend the Marchioness.

It was, certainly, with a beating heart that she obeyed it ; but she even now was not aware of the extent of the misfortune that had befallen her, for her experience of the world had not as yet afforded her an instance of that peculiar state of things, in which the *fact* of guilt or innocence is not the real question, but the decision turns upon the *appearance* of guilt or innocence. Lady Ellesmere was one of those good sort of people, of whom it would be difficult to say much evil, and not very easy to say much good, there was little activity of any sort or kind in her disposition, she was polished and pleasing in her manners, because such manners suited her birth, she was courteous and kindly to all who approached her, because courtesy belongs to high rank, (N.B. this is a secret generally unknown to modern novelists); she was charitable to the poor, more especially to decayed gentility, and careful of her husband's tenants, because it was suitable to her station; she was equable in her temper, because it was dignified to be so ; she was patient of inconveniences when such reached her, because she would not condescend to complain, and would have forgiven injury or even insult, rather than be at the trouble of quarrelling ; all that she did was more from its own fitness than from her impulse;—but under this outer crust of ice, there was still a strong flame, burning not the less intensely that it burned steadily and with little outward show, and that was the love of her children ; in that her whole being was absorbed, to that she would have sacrificed anything and anybody, and unhappily this very feeling was directly involved in the case in question. Clara might be innocent entirely; she might have been guilty of an indiscretion in listening to even honourable addresses in a place where she ought not to have been seen at all ; she might have been stained with guilt of a deeper die,—which of all these was the case Lady Ellesmere did not know, would have found it difficult to ascertain, and was unwilling to enquire,—but this she did know and feel, that Lady Emily's governess *must* be above reproach, or suspicion, and that right or wrong, deceiving or deceived, unjustly condemned, or rightfully punished, Clara could not be suffered to remain at Ellesmere.

A long and animated discussion had already taken place upon this subject, between the Marchioness and her two eldest daughters, in which that lady's views had been earnestly and eagerly opposed by both, according to their respective ways of thinking ; Lady Madelaine dwelling upon the improbability of Clara's being actuated by any feeling other than a possibly indiscreet curiosity in approaching the cottage,—bearing willing and abundant testimony to the excellence of her character, of which she herself had full and complete personal knowledge,—appealing to Lady Ellesmere's own feeling of justice, whether such a sufficient examination had been made into the real circumstances of the case, to warrant the course she was pursuing, and enlarging upon the apparent meddling of Sir Thomas Horton in the whole matter, and the more than doubts that existed about his character and motives;—whilst Lady Sarah declared roundly, that the idea of a secret interview between Mr. Fitzgerald and Miss Hastings, was so utterly preposterous, incredible, imaginative and impossible,

that nothing but the serious consequences it appeared to threaten, could keep her from dying of laughter: in the first place, she did not believe that it was possible for any human being to be so absurd and grotesque as to fall in love with such an animal as Mr. Fitzgerald, except in a fairy tale, such as "Bottom and Titania," and in the second place, that to her own certain knowledge, and very great amusement, Mr. Fitzgerald was deeply involved in whatever corresponded to love in his physiology, for Lady Madelaine, which, absurd as it was, was still a fact, for many facts are inexpressibly absurd; that to an interview, the consent of both parties was generally necessary, at all events of one; that, in this case, the consent of neither could be obtained; that therefore the whole thing was a confusion, or a misunderstanding, or an embroglio, or an optical delusion, or something of that sort, and ought to be thought no more about; all which logic, of her Ladyship's, however, made but little impression upon her mother, whose mind was already made up, that is to say, who had arrived at her conclusion the moment she had heard an account of the transaction, without by any means encountering the trouble or delay of analysing or examining the reasoning (if any) that led her thereto.

Mean time, a somewhat peculiar scene was going on in the dining-room, after the ladies left it. Sir Thomas Horton had appeared to be in high spirits during dinner-time, reckless, even beyond his usual recklessness, and utterly disregarding the suspicious, if not hostile looks, which were from time to time directed at him, by both Lady Madelaine and Lady Sarah. He had talked loudly, laughed almost incessantly, and drank freely; but soon after dinner, a change came over him—he ceased to address himself to his neighbours as he had done—his brow became gloomy—his eye glanced suspiciously from one to another, and he muttered unceasingly to himself. As guest after guest observed this, each seemed struck by it; a feeling of restraint, of awe, of almost alarm seemed infectious; the bottle lingered in its course, the conversation languished; few seemed inclined to talk, and none to listen; and Lord Ellesmere, seeing the gloom that was spreading through the assembly, proposed an adjournment to the ladies, much earlier than usual, which was evidently a sensible relief to all. As the party rose from table, each looked with an uneasy expression of doubt—of foreboding of some coming evil, in his neighbour's face, as if each felt that there was something at which humanity shudders connected with Sir Thomas Horton.

CHAPTER XXXIV

WE left our imprudent hero and his companions, if not actually in the hands, still not very far out of the hands of the Philistines, or at all events their heirs and assigns, in a position of no little difficulty, and indeed danger, blockaded in a cavern, in an impracticable ravine, by one of the wildest tribes on the face of the earth, whose natural ferocity and cupidity were farther inflamed by superstitious hate and superstitious fear, and who had succeeded, in the first instance, in detaching from them those friends upon whose influence they mainly relied for the privilege of pursuing their investigations unmolested; this aid was now gone, the sword was to negotiate, the enemy clustered round, but apparently dared not begin hostilities; for though with characteristic inconsistency these wild warriors, whose very lives constantly depended upon the quality of their weapons, valued their own fire-arms principally for the inlaying and embossing with which they were profusely ornamented, they were well acquainted with the deadly accuracy of the simple and unpretending rifle in the hands of an European; they had seen the careless negligence with which Lord de Creci had a few days ago raised his to his shoulder, and had seen a gazelle roll over and over, at a hundred and more yards off, and they were well aware that a man would have stood but an indifferent chance at that distance, so though their impatience prompted them to a general attack and massacre of the whole party, prudence forbade it. A formal attack might very probably terminate in a formal defeat, and there were plenty of unfriends of their own nation, ready to take advantage of such a mishap, but even supposing them to be successful, they had to deal with well armed and desperate Europeans, men whose personal courage being of a different order from that of Asiatics, is commonly looked upon all over the East as having a very reasonable portion of insanity, not to say diabolism in it, a victory over them could not be expected without a loss of men, which an Arab tribe could not afford to sustain, and so it was that no active hostilities were entered into. The Fellahs swarmed on the rocks, and a strong body of horsemen shewed themselves in the city, but they did not attack; the horses and baggage were safely got into the spacious excavation that sheltered the party, and even the camels were moved into a place where the Arabs would have found it difficult to molest them without exposing themselves more than it was thought likely they would venture upon; a few stones and a large slab that had covered a sarcophagus stopped the entrance, the watch was set, and the party passed that night with tolerable comfort and without disturbance, (scorpions excepted.)

Indeed, for the reasons above-mentioned, they had little or nothing to fear as long as they remained in the cavern; they were too strongly posted to be attacked, but though they had provisions sufficient to last for

*7 "Oh! So I am sure a man would
"the danger" of your party*

some time, they had barely water enough for the next day, and though there was a brook running through the Wady Mousa, they were too far from it to obtain a supply, without exposing the party seeking it to the chance of being cut off. Early in the morning, Lord de Creci sent to the hostile Arabs, to endeavour to negotiate with them for a safe retreat, but it was evident that they were bent upon mischief; it is probable that in the excited state they were in, their hatred of the *giaours* might have induced them to prefer the gratification of that evil passion to their cupidity, but in this instance the two passions worked harmoniously together; for though they dwelt much upon the outrage the Christians had committed, in forcing their way into their lands, in remaining there after having been repeatedly warned to withdraw, in attempting to carry off one of their principal buildings in their portfolios, and what was worse, carrying away one of themselves, still it was manifest, that under all this pretence of patriotism there lurked another motive. So rich a prey had never been seen in the Wady Mousa; other Europeans had come with little money, few horses, and few arms, and, moreover, had come expressly under the protection of native *Sheicks*, who would be responsible for any violence offered to them, and would infallibly retaliate; who could waste their crops, and cut off their supplies, without even the inconvenience of a blood feud, but now it was otherwise; here were valuable horses, much property, arms, ammunition, and money, literally shut up in a trap, for in the tomb the *Fellahs* knew perfectly well they could not remain for want of water more than a day at the outside, the idea of their breaking cover and forcing their way at the point of the sword out of Petra did not occur to them; that seemed utterly beyond even Frankish audacity, and taking it for granted that the whole party were altogether in their power, they came to the inevitable Arab conclusion of stripping them in any case of every single article of property they possessed, and then, if need were, massacring them. The guides and grooms they had brought from Kerek, were of no sort of use now; they were Arabs of the towns, and came from such a distance, that the animosity of their tribes would have signified nothing; indeed, by sparing them, and giving them some trifling present out of the spoil, even that would be avoided. The great point was gained that of the abandonment of the Christians by the *Sheick* who was bound in honour to protect them; and judging himself secure of his prey, the *Sheick* of Wady Mousa made no secret of his intentions towards them, even whilst, with a singular reliance on European faith, he did not hesitate to place himself in their power for the time, by coming to hold a conference with them upon the terms under which he would undertake to guarantee them their lives, which, being the modest demand of the surrender of every single article of arms and property they had with them, and a bill for fifty thousand piastres, upon the payment of which, at Hebron or Jerusalem, they were to be safely conducted to Hebron, were not very likely to be accepted.

"Upon our heads be it, O Effendi," said the *Sheick*,* with great gravity, when he had completed this liberal offer, "that we conduct you safely to Hebron, in the name of the Prophet; not a hair of your heads shall be harmed. Allah is great."

* *Sheick*

"May your bounty be extolled for ever, O Sheick," returned the Earl; "but we think we can do it cheaper ourselves."

"How, O Effendi, when we say you shall not go? are we nothing in the Wady Mousa? are these rocks ours or yours? Shall we shed one another's blood for a little money? May Allah forbid it."

"We will pay you reasonably, O Sheick," returned the other, "for what assistance you render us; but know that an Englishman never surrenders his arms. If you will conduct us, our servants, our camels, our horses, and baggage in safety to Hebron, then we will pay you the sum we should have paid those men who deserted us,—if you will not, then we wash our hands of what may follow."

"What can follow, O Effendi?" returned the other; "you are but a handful among us,—are you the sons of the giants that you should set us at nought?"

"Tell him we are the sons of double-barrelled guns," interrupted Harry; "and our mothers talk all languages, and clear all scores."

"Truly, O Sheick," said Lord de Creci, "we are not the sons of the giants, seeing that there are no giants in these days on the earth, but we are the sons of the sword, the which weapon we purpose presently unsheathing, though we would not willingly shed blood."

"Upon your own heads be it, O Effendi," returned the Sheick; "Allah is merciful. You are in our power, you and your horses, and your baggage, all must remain here, it is already ours; praise be to Allah."

"Do you refuse our offer, O Sheick?"

"You offer what is already our own, O Effendi," returned the Sheick, stroking his beard with great complacency; "praise be to Allah and his holy Prophet, all you have must remain here."

"Then be it known to you, O Sheick," returned the Earl, a dark gladiatorial expression stealing over his countenance, "that we will march out of the Wady Mousa, with our guns loaded and our swords drawn, that we will not leave one horse or one cup, one piastre or one tent-pin behind us, and whosoever offers to impede our passage we will shoot him to death, and his blood be on his own head."

"God save the king," said Harry, in token of his approval of the Earl's speech.

"Do you want to be all killed?" exclaimed the astonished Sheick, who could hardly imagine such an undertaking entering into a head not already turned; "are you mad?"

"Yes, O Sheick, we are very mad," returned the Earl, with the most profound gravity, and it seemed to the full satisfaction of the Arab that it was actually the case, for he retired at once, without farther parley, and the negotiation was not renewed that day, during the rest of which, the besieged travellers continued steadily making their arrangements, for, if possible, stealing out, if not breaking out of Petra during the night, and by dark they had every thing ready, the loading of the camels alone excepted; this, however, soon after sunset they accomplished unobserved, and towards midnight, in dead silence, but complete preparation for battle, they set forth on their road.

It was a night of singular beauty, as they defiled warily through

that spectral city, a night characterised by a clearness and transparency unknown to the black vault, to which our northern sky has not unaptly been compared; the heavens had not the appearance of a sable dome pierced with innumerable holes of different sizes, but of a mighty expanse of a liquid darkness, in which myriads upon myriads of particles of liquid light were floating at ever varying distances, for the eye clearly recognised that the difference of size and brilliancy it observed in these sparkling globes arose more from their distance from the earth than from any difference in their magnitudes; and under the influence of the night a feeling of reverential awe, strengthened perhaps by the presence of danger, seemed to pervade the whole party, not one single word was spoken; all arms were secured, so as to prevent any clatter from them, the tramp of the horses was but a dead and hollow sound, for they had cut up their principal tent to muffle their feet with, and onward they went as if some of the inhabitants of the bygone city had risen from their tombs in the dead of the night, and were seeking to escape from the dominion of the grave. For twenty minutes they thus held their noiseless way, no chase had yet been commenced, the dead silence, remarked both by the Earl and Harry, convinced them both that the worst part of the night's undertaking was over; once out of the narrow valley which they were threading, in whose confined gorge two horses could barely move abreast, they had little to fear; the enemy in the open country would have no advantage from their local knowledge of places of shelter, whence they might pick them off without danger to themselves; in a fair stand up fight in the plain, the stout hearts, cool heads, and good fire-arms of the six Europeans, would probably be an overmatch for any force that was likely to be brought against them, if indeed they did not succeed in interposing such a distance between themselves and their enemies before they were missed, as should deter the latter from pursuit altogether. The path they were following, which was in fact nothing but the bed of the river that waters Petra, now perceptibly mounted, the tombs and dwelling places became scarcer and scarcer, the decorations of sculpture gave way gradually to the graceful forms of nature; the waving branches of the living oleander and tamarisk, replaced the marble imitation of the acanthus, a few stray willows by the side of the brook, reminded the travellers of homelier scenes; the rocks above opened more and more, the ravine became broader and broader, and at last Lord de Creci, who had led the party, rode out into the open plain, and wheeling his horse round, waited on a rising ground till the whole party had defiled under his eyes, not one man nor one horse wanting, and then joined Harry who had brought up the rear.

"So far so good," said he; "I hardly expected to have got such a start, I thought some pilferer or other would surely have been prowling about and have discovered us."

"Probably," said Harry, "they considered us public property, to be equitably divided on the morrow, and that private stealing in the night would be poaching on a friend's manor. I should think that was pretty good Arab morality, but it strikes me that they'll find a trifling error in their calculations; I should like to go back and see their disappointment when they find the trap empty and the bird flown."

"It would be somewhat a hazardous indulgence of one's curiosity," sturned the Earl, "but we are not quite safe yet; I do not think that or two days we can reckon upon our being in perfect security, for sooner or later they will certainly pursue, and we are still very weak in oint of numbers, compared with them, for we can really only count pon ourselves; not one of these men," continued he, lowering his oice and looking suspiciously round upon their Arab attendants, "not ne of these men will remain with us if the Fellahs attack in earnest, or they all know we will fight to the last, that some blood will be shed rhatever the result may be, and they will not stay by us and hazard a lood feud with their formidable neighbours."

"Then they may go to the devil their own way," quoth Captain fowbray, and for some time they rode on in silence.

"What a glorious night it is," at last exclaimed Lord de Creci, 'the very skies seem alive with the countless orbs that are wheeling o silently and ceaselessly above us, 'the heavens truly declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork.' Mowbray, fowbray," continued he, looking fixedly at his companion, and for he first time addressing himself directly to a subject which was, nevertheless, very near his heart, "can you look, unmoved, upon the scene re have just quitted; can you look, with a cold, unbelieving eye, upon he record of the fulfilment of prophecy, engraved in imperishable haracters of granite, in the rock that we are leaving behind us, the ruth written in tablets of marble; can you look, unmoved, on the majesty, the glory of the night, to which the heaven above you bears itness, in all the silent eloquence of the eternal stars; can you see heae things unmoved?"

The other was, manifestly, affected, much had passed to change is opinion since he had landed in that soil, but something yet emained to be done, and that was, to subdue his pride; that was a ask that belonged to a higher hand; the mere successful exercise of uman reason is as likely to confirm, as to subdue human pride; but till it was with a levity of manner that had no place in his heart, that ie carelessly answered:—

"It seems to me, that we should have studied those records in very ad company, and with most serious danger of having our throats cut, nd as to the stars, I observe that their rays flash back from spear-heads and bayonets."

"It is too true," returned the Earl, "human wickedness is at work very where, even this glorious scene is polluted with the preparations or human slaughter. Little did the camel-driver's son imagine what fatal legacy of hate he was leaving to the world, when he contrived hat cunning scheme that was to draw so many after it to destruction."

"I never could understand," said Harry, "why the Mahometans, who are, and always have been, the most religiously warlike people he world ever saw, should have chosen to date their era from Mahomet's *flight* from Mecca: if they had taken his birth or his leath, it would have been intelligible, or the entry into Mecca, or the ictory of Beder; but to date from a flight is to me incomprehensible, or a fanatical nation of warriors."

"You are partly right," answered the Earl, "the flight from Mecca is certainly the era they date from ; but it was not the flight that they mean, when they speak of the Hegira: Mahomet had fled often enough before, he had been a fugitive and an outlaw for twelve years before; flight was nothing new to him: the incident that has given the 16th of July such a bloody pre-eminence among the days of the year, was the measure that has stamped the character of Islamism to this day; it was the *drawing of the sword*, which has not been sheathed yet; the principle he then for the first time laid down, that 'the faith that is oppressed by the sword, must be protected by the sword,' and which was instantly extended into, 'must be propagated by the sword:' from the moment that declaration passed his lips, Islamism became a fact, a power that moved nations, and crushed empires."

"He was a cunning priest, and a good soldier," returned Harry, "and if I mistake not, we shall soon have the benefit of his tenets, for the sounds behind us are not the waving of bushes, or the trickling of waters; they are up, and on our traces."

"I can hear nothing," said the Earl.

"I can though."

Lord de Creci listened for some time, but in vain. "It is imagination," said he, "though still we have to expect them soon; those men we have left behind, are quite as much actuated at this moment by their hatred of Christians as they are by their avarice, the indulgence of the two evil passions together, is an earthly paradise to the Moslem. I remember once going round a lunatic asylum at Cairo, which was more like a receptacle for wild beasts than an habitation for human beings, for it was nothing but a range of dens round a court-yard, each with a strong grating, behind which the unhappy maniacs hooted and gibbered hideously, and there had just been a distribution of food by some charitable person, the only sustenance, as my guide assured me, they had had for twenty-four hours, for their daily bread is dependant on the charity of individuals, when I observed one of these wretched lunatics who would not eat a piece of water-melon he had just received. I thought it odd at the moment, for the man's lips were parched, and he looked at it from time to time as if he could swallow it at one gulp, he seemed to me to be perishing of thirst, however, I took no more notice of him, and went round the court with the keeper, and just as I came within a few yards of this man, he dashed the piece of water-melon in my face, with a howl of exultation. The delight of injuring or insulting a Christian, overcame hunger and thirst, according to the ideas of that poor lunatic!"

"Well, we shall soon have another specimen of their favour for Christians," said Henry, "for I hear them behind as distinctly as possible,"—and, indeed, this time Lord de Creci was obliged to admit that the younger ears were the better ones, and that, in point of fact, the chase was already begun; they had, however, now gained the open country, and had, at all events, passed safely out of the rocky ravines, in which a handful of men might have arrested their progress, they closed up into a compact body, and continued to move steadily but rapidly onwards, ready to receive an attack at any moment, and not

very doubtful of the result. Some time, however, elapsed before the enemy came in sight, whether he lost time in collecting his forces, or delayed his horsemen by waiting for their fellows on foot, did not at first appear; but hour after hour passed away, the march, though evidently discovered, was unmolested, a few straggling horsemen would hover about them from time to time, but never approached within hail, they seemed merely to follow for the purpose of watching them, and the stars began at last to melt away in the light of the coming sun.

With the first gleams of day, however, came the perception of the cause of their unmolested progress, the Arabs, more familiar with the country, had moved rapidly during the night by a shorter road, to a difficult mountain pass, which they now occupied, those on foot in very considerable numbers, and with every demonstration of intending to bar the passage, and the horsemen on the plain beyond ready to pounce upon the Christians, even if they should succeed in forcing the pass. At the same moment that they came in sight of these formidable preparations for arresting their progress, a strong body of their enemies appeared in the rear, as if for the purpose of driving them headlong into the trap, and at the sight, whose purport they well understood, every native of the country that was attached to their party deserted them at once, dispersing in every direction, evidently either afraid of the consequences that might result from the battle that seemed inevitable, or more probably, already tampered with by the Fellahs, who seemed to have marked this party as their prey with an unusual determination.

"They would not have fought, and they'd only have hampered us," remarked Harry, as they hastily scrambled away among the rocks, the horses of those who were mounted shewing a goat-like activity in making their way over the rough ground,— "we are better without them," and the Earl thought so too,—notwithstanding that their party was now reduced to six, Lord de Creci, Harry, the skipper of the schooner, the two servants, and the sailor, all six mounted,—and two camels forming all their encumbrance. An Arab, apparently of some consideration, galloped up from the rear, making signs of a wish to negotiate, but it was evident that this was merely for the purpose of gaining time, delaying the Christians till more help should arrive for their enemies, or till the heat of the day should add still further to their difficulties.

"I look upon that narrow place they have occupied there so strongly, in the light of a stiff fence," said Harry to the Earl, "a sort of Syrian bullfinch; there is nothing for it, but to get our heads straight, cram at it, and go through with a run. Hadn't those two sailors and Jerry better dismount; they'll make no shooting from horseback?"

"No," said the Earl, "we do not want shots to kill yet, we want them to frighten, that they will do well enough as it is, and we shall probably get safe through; but if we once kill a man, it will be a very serious business."

"Just as you like," replied Harry, "it's all one to me."

"Remember Lady Hester's advice," said the Earl, with a smile, "'carrying arms may assure your life, but using them may ensure your death;' besides other men's lives are to be considered."

"Pooh, it's not come to that yet awhile," returned the Captain, casting a glance of, perhaps, not quite warrantable contempt at the swarm of Arabs, that, wrapped up in their great cloaks, sat like so many wolves in sheep's clothing, on the sides of the hills, under the very firelocks of which respectable assembly, they were in a few minutes to pass, without any very distinct knowledge, of whether those firelocks were to be used or not; and just at the moment the mention of one lady suggesting the image of another to his mind, a thought came across him, that if it were possible to find a convenient nook among these rocks, commanding a good view of the coming skirmish, but well out of the range of fire, and that if time and space, and circumstances could be annihilated, or otherwise modified, or reformed or repealed, so as to suit his views, it would add extremely to the personal pleasure he expected to feel in teaching the Arabs that those who meddle with fire are apt to burn their fingers, were that nook occupied by Clara Hastings. Surely she would relax a little in her severity if she saw the style in which he headed an attack, especially against unbelievers. However, there was no time for speculations of this sort, it was a time for loosening sabres in their scabbards, getting pouches open, looking to priming, seeing that copper-caps had not fallen off, and that sort of thing; they placed the camels in the centre, closed in a compact body round them, unslung firelocks, and moved gallantly on. It was curious to observe the characteristic tempers of the different nations, as shewn in the advance; the English sailors marched steadily and carelessly onwards, their countenances were unchanged, and apparently unchangeable, and the only token they gave of their being placed in an unusual position, or one of any difficulty or danger, was in their eyes, that piercingly and warily traversed the country before them, but there was neither fear nor doubt in those glances, it was merely just examining the ground to see where to go, and what to do. Jerry, on the contrary, was more animated, his sparkling and eager eye glanced rapidly and savagely from one to another of the enemy, as if he was selecting the particular individual who was to enjoy the favour of his first shot, with a full intention that that happy man should by no means stand in need of a second, consoling himself, in the meantime, with some muttered maledictions upon the "haythen rabbers," and some very liberal promises, in case he ever caught any of them at the fair of Clogheen; whilst Fritz, who was personally to the full as brave as any of the others, exhibited his courage in totally a different form, he was wrought up into a state of excitement, bordering upon frenzy, he swore at the Arabs, and then he swore at his stirrups, because he could not stamp in them, he shook his clenched fist at the hills, and then laughed at the danger, he then became exceedingly dangerous to his friends himself, by the vivacity with which he kept examining, and displacing, and replacing his fire-arms. As they approached the pass that was to be the scene of the first trial of strength, the crowd who had already appeared at their rear, formed a half circle, overlapping their flanks, much to Bluthenbaum's indignation, who glared to and fro like a surrounded tiger, as if he were looking out for a "soft place" to break through, and by the time they had come within gunshot of

the hill they were thus completely hemmed in. The most violent menaces, the most furious abuse, the most frantic gesticulations, that the madness of the moment could suggest, raged in a perfect whirlwind around them ; but still no shot had yet been fired ; the robbers of the desert wished to intimidate the travellers into being quietly robbed, precisely in the same manner as their corresponding class in England, "the movement party" were at that very moment endeavouring to carry their own measures of spoliation, by what they called "moral influence," viz. the *gentle* application of physical force; for what is humorously called "moral influence," bears much the same relation to physical force, that a screw does to a sledge-hammer.

It certainly was a trying moment when they approached the pass, the hill-side seemed alive with the enemy, their numbers were sufficient to destroy the small European party with one volley, were they so minded, but still much reliance was to be placed upon their well known reluctance to come to extremities; a dead silence fell upon the little band as the crisis drew nigh, slowly, sternly, steadily, they advanced, no voice broke the stillness of their array, the trampling of their horses, the ringing of their bridles, and an occasional clank of arms, alone was heard, as two abreast, all that the road admitted of, they ascended the pass, whose occupants seemed absolutely paralysed by the cool audacity that thus dared to beard them in their mountain fastnesses, and they were close to the gorge of the pass before a single shot was fired. The first discharge was a desultory one, the balls whizzed away at a distance, it was clear that they had been fired in the air, and the only answer was, 'Steady, steady,' in the deep stern voice of Lord de Creci,—repeated sharply and hurriedly—

"Steady, you O'Driscoll there," by Harry from the rear; for Jerry,—in the innocence of his heart, was about to return the fire, as a matter of course, and muttering 'two can play at that game, my joker, and we'll see who can play best,'—had just fixed his eye upon an Arab, whose violent gestures had attracted his notice, and whose life, had it not been for Harry's intervention, was at that moment, barring a miss fire, probably worth the time that it takes a musket ball to traverse about a hundred and fifty yards, and no more. The Arabs were again at fault, the imperturbable calmness of the party troubled them much more than a volley of musketry would have done, and some even whispered that the accursed foreigners did not use their arms because they had some unlawful method of getting out of the scrape, some looked to the heavens as if they expected them to open in a deluge of water, others again looked at the earth as if they expected it to open with its own peculiar fluid, others looked to the desert to see whether there were any columns of sand, whirlwinds, simoons, or other auxiliaries in the neighbourhood,—but the desert looked as innocent as a new born babe, as quiet as if butter would not melt upon its sands,—this again disturbed them, and still the steady progress of the Europeans continued till they were absolutely in the pass.

"Look out for the word 'Forward,'" said Lord de Creci from the front, "charge up the pass when you hear it."

"Look out for the word 'Forward,'" repeated Harry from the rear.

"Faith, you needn't tell us to do that, we've been waitin' for it till our hearts ache," muttered O'Driscoll, as a few more straggling shots broke from the rocks, and the Earl turned calmly round in his saddle, and gave the word 'Forward!'

The party set spurs to their horses directly; the steeds, accustomed to the country, sprang eagerly forward, the rocks and the stones were no novelties to them, the rough and broken ground rolled back behind their clattering hoofs as if it were a race-course, a storm of fire clattered from the hill side, and the balls came with their sharp angry spitting, above, among, and around them, but none struck; a few minutes of scrambling and confusion passed in a tumultuous excitement, as rood after rood of ground was passed, and it would probably be hard to say which were most astonished, the Arabs or the Christians, when the party found that they had cleared the dangerous pass, and rode unharmed out into the plain. A triumphant oath broke from the lips of Bluthenbaum, but he congratulated himself too soon, for their troubles were even then only beginning.

"This is something, but we have not done with them yet," said Lord de Creci, who knew better; "I see now what it is makes them so resolute: they know that Ibrahim and his Egyptian army will be here in a few weeks, and when the country is once the scene of civil war, few questions will be asked about the fate of travellers, and few still will be answered; though indeed I can hardly blame them. We come on their ground, without leave asked or given, we destroy their crops, we outrage their feeling of property, and their point of honour, by forcing our way into their territories, the land of which their ancestors were princes and nobles, thousands of years before there was such a thing as a gentleman in England, and had numbered the stars, and meted out the fields, and built cities, when our forefathers were painted savages, and then we wonder that they resist."

"Why, you *would* insist upon coming here yourself," said Harry, who was somewhat struck by the inconsistency between Lord de Creci's words and his actions.

"True," returned the other, gloomily, "I must fulfil my destiny—we must go on now through good or evil—but I do not believe that the history of the earth, from the very beginning, affords such a colossal instance of practical impudence, as the cool manner in which Europe, and especially England, appropriates the rest of the world to herself at this moment."

"A queer crotchet that, to come into his head at this moment," muttered Harry;—"I say, could not you carry that pistol just as well on half-cock," continued he, observing that one of Lord de Creci's pistols was cocked; for the being engaged in warfare gave his thoughts the practical turn of an old soldier's, whilst the excitement of the moment sent Lord de Creci's ideas off on the wings of imagination, through time and space:—and nothing more passed between them as they pursued their course among the barren and desolate sand-hills that stretched away and away in dreary and dusty sterility before them, puzzling and perplexing them every moment as to which path to choose.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE decision at which she had arrived, of the necessity of sending Clara back to her mother, was certainly a painful one to Lady Ellesmere, and had it been possible completely to clear up the matter, so as to shew that no blame could attach to the poor girl, she would have rejoiced most sincerely ; she had no cruelty in her disposition, no taste for inflicting needless suffering, still less for being herself distressed by witnessing it, but alas, the explanation that would have cleared all up, and shewed how innocence had been lured unwittingly to the abode of vice, was one that never would be given, it was locked up in the breast of one, who, so far from being willing to give it, had conspired to bring about the unfortunate delusion of which she was to be the victim. All Sir Thomas Horton's ingenuity had been exhausted for days in carefully preparing her condemnation unheard, by poisoning beforehand the mind of Lady Ellesmere against her, until she was so perfectly and unalterably convinced of Clara's guilt, as to receive with a calm incredulity, all her protestations of her innocence.

The Marchioness, as is not uncommonly the case with those whose high rank and station elevate them above the mass who surround them, was altogether unaware of the extent of injury that an inconsiderate act of hers was capable of indeed certain of inflicting on those dependant on her. She never paused to reflect, that for those once cherished and then deserted by the great ones of this world, there is no mercy to be found among the little ones ; the envious, and the parasite, the uncharitable, and the self-seekers, the crawlers after the great, and they that love not their neighbours, such, the very small souls of the earth, grovelling, but also swarming, turn upon the unfortunate with an alacrity, despicable truly, but not the less mischievous for that, for it does not require much of the sneers and slights of malice, to embitter a life already withered by calumny.

Lady Ellesmere never reflected, that the very fact of her sending Clara home, on account of her having been found in a cottage of indifferent reputation in the neighbourhood of the park, would be taken by all to whose knowledge the fact came, as evidence of her being convinced that she was there with an improper motive ; she never paused to think of the injustice that she committed in sending her away, with the imputation of guilt, whilst it was in her power to ascertain her innocence, nor did she consider either the ruin in a mere worldly point of view, or what was still worse, the mental anguish to which she was sentencing her, nor, parent as she was herself, was she turned from her purpose, by the consideration of the misery that her daughter's lying under such an imputation must inflict on her widowed mother. She satisfied her own mind with the reflection, that whatever the purpose with which her governess had sought Lilac Villa might be, that

was a matter for which she was not responsible, or bound to give an opinion, Clara had no business there at all, that was sufficient for her, to every thing else her affection for her own child made her deaf-blind,—all other considerations were matters of little moment, and must give way; the tigress in defence of the young might be more energetic, but could not be more resolute, and it must be admitted more pitiless. She received Clara with her habitual courtesy, expressed her regret at the unfortunate occurrence with a cold civility that left nothing to be complained of, but every thing to be wished for, and after some mistimed morality and misplaced advice, informed her, with a calm unruffled countenance, and a manner that was considerate, if not almost compassionate, that after what had happened, it was with great pain, that she had come to the conclusion, that it would be utterly impossible for her, consistently with her duty as a mother to Lady Emily, to retain her any longer in her family, in her present employment, and that she must prepare to return to her mother as soon as arrangements could be made for sending her home. Clara was thunder-struck with this communication, she certainly had expected a painful and embarrassing scene, she was prepared for incredulity on the part of the Marchioness, she expected difficulty in explaining the whole matter to that Lady's satisfaction: strong in conscious innocence, she had never doubted, but that it would be cleared up, though to say truth, she hardly knew how; but she had never for an instant imagined that her guilt could either be taken for granted, or considered as a matter of no moment, and her fair fame blasted by a withering indifference that was almost harder to bear than actual reproach, however violent the latter might have been.

"For heaven's sake, Lady Ellesmere," remonstrated she, "consider what you are doing, consider that you are unjustly and oppressively fixing a stain upon my character that is dearer to me than my life, by sending me home in this manner; if I am guilty, let me be treated as such, but do not inflict the worst punishment of guilt, the punishment of infamy upon one who is innocent; inquire before you condemn, ask the woman the house belongs to, ask the gypsy what was my reason for going there; it may have been indiscreet yielding to such a curiosity, it may have been silly, it may have been culpable, I am young, inexperienced, unsuspicious. Have pity upon me, let me go home, but not disgraced; I have done nothing wrong, and indeed, if it was wrong, I was sorely tempted; you cannot tell, Lady Ellesmere, you, who went from the happy home of your father, to the happy home of your husband, you cannot tell the feelings that chill the heart of the homeless, you cannot feel the yearnings of the fatherless, and you cannot even conceive the terrible suspicions that sometimes come over me about my father. The gypsy told me she had something to tell me. I thought she had, I could not resist, I did not know the character of the house, and I even now think it was a trap laid to ruin me, though why any one should wish to ruin me I cannot conceive; I never hurt any one, I never as much as trod on a worm,"—here she paused, for instinctively she connected Sir Thomas Horton with her misfortune, for some reason or other she had always feared him from the first time

that she had met him in the neighbourhood of Somerton; her mother's undisguised terror had made a deep impression on her, and his peculiar lowering countenance never arose before her imagination without producing the impression on her mind of the presence of a being whose motives were as undefineable as his actions were uncalculable; it seemed as if that savage aspect was animated by a spirit not of this earth, and a cold shudder, even now, came over her as she recalled her mother's anticipations of evil, and reflected on what a melancholy meeting their next would be; when she thought how she never could walk in that cheerful road again with the light heart of yore, and insensibly connected that dark man with her misfortune. "You cannot know," continued she, her thoughts reverting to her other parent, "what a fearful curiosity tears the heart of a child to whom her father's life or death is a mystery. All that I ask, is, that you will not condemn me unheard."

"I do not condemn you unheard," returned Lady Ellesmere, calmly but decidedly, "I do not condemn you unheard, for I do not condemn you at all. I should be glad, indeed, if this had never happened; I do not, however, give an opinion in a matter in which I can come to no certain conclusion, and with what objects you sought that den of infamy, I cannot tell; but I have a duty to perform to my child, and it is enough for me, that you are so seriously compromised by the circumstances under which you were found there, as to make it impossible that you should continue to be her governess; nobody can be suffered to fill that situation, to whom even suspicion attaches."

"Suspicion," replied Clara, her colour rapidly rising, her eyes flashing, the veins of her forehead swelling, her nostrils distending, and an angry pride coming in to support her sinking heart, "with what justice can you apply the term suspicion to me? with what heart can you talk to me of suspicion, when you refuse to give me the opportunity of repelling such suspicions as they deserve?"

"You have nothing but bare assertions to repel them with," replied Lady Ellesmere, who though she would willingly have removed those suspicions from poor Clara, could see no mode of doing so, except by retaining her in her family, which she was fully determined not to do, and therefore assumed a coldness of demeanour that was a stranger to her heart, for she was really deeply pained by the necessity, which in her mind her duty imposed upon her, of the consequences of which to Clara she was not unaware, but could not avert; "you have nothing but bare assertions to meet them with; I do not affirm, however appearances may be against you, that you were actually there to meet that wretched Irishman. I should almost have thought you had better taste; indeed how Lord Ellesmere could ever tolerate him here, I never could imagine; that is the consequence of the Relief Bill, that these people have now such influence in the country, that we must ask them to our house; to be sure he amused Lady Sarah, which was something certainly, but even that was dearly purchased, for I am convinced that Lady Madelaine detested him, and then his intolerable vulgarity—"

"Good Heavens, Lady Ellesmere," interrupted Clara, who could not think that the moment when the whole tenor of her future life, her

good or evil fortune hung trembling in the balance, and a few words from the lips of the Marchioness would turn the scale, that this moment was the proper time for the cool discussion as to the eligibility of Mr. Fitzgerald as a guest at Ellesmere, into which the good lady was digressing apparently so unaccountably, but really because she felt embarrassed when the moment approached, as it now rapidly did, that she must pronounce the fatal and final sentence that was to send poor Clara back to her joyless home, with a blasted fame, and she insensibly put off from moment to moment the painful termination of their conversation.

"Good heavens, whatever injury you may inflict upon me, do not insult me by supposing that I could have gone to that odious place to meet that wretch; I went, as I told you, because the gypsy promised to tell me something about my father. I never knew that Mr. Fitzgerald was there; I never thought of anything, but what I might learn from her; I never dared to ask my mother, my poor mother, the very thought of him used to drive her into tears,—and now the thought of me will do so too; but I see I speak to deaf ears. I have nothing more to say." She drew herself up to her full height, her pride, her sense of injustice, cruel injustice, nerved her, and with a stately dignity she took leave of Lady Ellesmere, before that lady had time to answer.

"Who on earth can it be, that that girl reminds me of so," said the Marchioness to herself; "I am convinced I have seen somebody like her before, particularly when she looks angry; she is not altogether unlike Sir Thomas, but who it is I cannot imagine; I wish this had never happened, she was so thoroughly ladylike in her manners, and indeed, in her ideas, but however, as Sir Thomas says—" We may spare the reader the remainder of Lady Ellesmere's soliloquy, by remarking, that the readiness with which her Ladyship arrived at the conclusion that Clara had really gone to Lilac Villa for the purpose of meeting Mr. Fitzgerald, was, as we have already stated, mainly owing to the malignant care with which Sir Thomas had poisoned her mind against her.

Upon reaching her room, Clara, no longer sustained by the feelings that actuated her in the presence of Lady Ellesmere, abandoned herself to the pressure of her situation. "My mother, my poor mother!—and what will Harry think of all this,"—exclaimed she passionately, as she flung herself on the bed in an agony of tears; a light low tap at the door roused her, as Lady Madelaine glided noiselessly into the room, and without uttering a syllable flung herself upon her neck. It was strange, that for half an hour those two gentle girls sat without either breaking the dead silence of that sad time; Lady Madelaine felt that no necessity existed for assuring Clara of her utter disbelief of the story which had already, through the care of Sir Thomas, been circulated through the house; she was fully convinced that Clara could never imagine, that she could hold her guilty; yet she could hardly express her sympathy with her, without more or less directly reproaching her own mother, and the same cause in a great degree kept Clara silent; she could not speak what she thought, without wounding the feelings of her friend, and she spoke not. Lady

Madelaine looked earnestly into her face, a gentle pressure of the hand was the only means by which she could express feelings that have their place among the thoughts, that are unspoken and not to be spoken, that belong to the order that high heaven has set beyond the reach of the lying lips, and the deceitful tongue of the earth-born; but, silent as her sympathy was, poor Clara felt still that its expression was complete, and they parted without a word being exchanged. It may be supposed that that night brought but little rest to Clara; troubled dreams, uneasy thoughts, the spectral consciousness of something being wrong haunted her pillow; she lay still in the stillness of the night, her soul darkened, her spirit crushed, her heart withered, her youth blighted; a host of phantoms wheeling and circling around her, mocking her with their gibberings, tormenting her with their hideous shiftings and changings; here an image of beauty that melted away almost before she was aware of its presence: there a ghastly spectre that swelled suddenly to a gigantic size, and threatening to devour her, as suddenly changed into green fields and a smiling garden, that in its turn took motion and transparency and the hoarse roar of the raging ocean, and on it the lifeless body of Harry Mowbray, the hideous brilliancy of the eyes of the drowned man leaving a doubt whether he was really dead; and with the howling of the tempest, mingled the demoniac laugh of Sir Thomas Horton, he laid his hand on her shoulders, as she stooped over the body, and a fierce pain shot over her neck, and through her head, her brow seemed burning—for amongst that shadowy crowd with which her bewildered brain peopled her lonely chamber, there was one reality, one terrible reality, though she saw it not, she heard it not, as yet she felt it not,—yet was it there, and had already struck its burning talons into her care-worn frame, and that ghastly reality was Fever.

Morning broke upon a flushed brow, and a confused brain, giddiness and lassitude, chilliness and heat, chasing one another over a parched skin,—a sunken countenance, and a spiritless eye,—moaning and muttering,—and when the physician, who was immediately sent for, arrived to attend her, a single glance was sufficient to inform his practised eye what was the trial she had yet to undergo before she could be removed from Ellesmere.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

WE must now return to the party whom we left entangled in the Wilderness of Petræa. They had entered the open plain, closely pursued by the Arabs, whose first astonishment at the unexpected escape of their prey had immediately given way to the most unmitigated rage. Horsemen and footmen mingled, crowded in a confused mass after them, but did not venture to come to close quarters; the pointing of a gun at those who attempted to press too near, had always the desired effect of repelling them, and so for the greater part of the morning, the march continued without interruption. At noon, however, it became advisable to halt for an hour or two, for the heat was becoming oppressive, and they all hoped that a forced march in the night would have the good effect of removing them beyond the reach of their enemies, whose numbers were every moment increasing, and with them their audacity. Some mouldering ruins, in which the Edomite, the Jew, the Roman, and the Saracen, might in turn have preceded them as lodgers, afforded them a sort of imperfect shelter for a few hours, the enemy apparently not much liking to risk themselves within reach of fire from behind stone walls, having halted at a respectful distance, evidently waiting for the chase to break cover. All were, however, tired, and having completed their frugal meal, sleep seemed gradually to creep over the whole party, and seeing the advisability of their starting once more thoroughly refreshed, Harry proposed that they should lie down and sleep, he volunteering to watch during a part of the time, and in a few minutes the party were, if not sleeping, there and thereabouts.

The young soldier paced backward and forward, casting his anxious glances on every side, but though the armed body of their foes were resting idly, little more than five hundred yards off, none of them seemed inclined to move, not one solitary figure strayed from the cluster into which they had assembled, and that sultry landscape in the desert was as still as the grave. The time and place were not without their influence upon the lonely watcher. To watch whilst others slept was nothing new to him, many and many a time before, he had looked out over foreign ground in search of an eastern enemy; there, as now, victory, safety, life, depending upon unceasing vigilance in rest, and unswerving courage in action, but it had always seemed to him that night-watching acted differently upon the mind, than the vigil by day. In the stillness of the night he used to think all surrounding objects magnified, at least that was the impression they made upon his senses; the broad heavens asserted their own peculiar and overawing majesty, and seemed to shed a holy dignity upon all things above and below, the plains seemed interminable sheets of black surface, sprinkled with silver spangles, the dark woods, clothed in the luxuriant tropical foliage of Burmah, looked to him more like the giant shadows of the past forests of past worlds,

in the tangled and swampy jungle that sheltered tigers and snakes, and yet worse, hostile savages, who themselves, in his mind's eye, seemed more to be men, the lords of earth, made after God's own image, than he could before imagine them; he had a respect for the lurking enemy and a confused impression of desperate warriors in countless numbers that he never experienced the day time, whilst behind him, imagination peopled the silent camp of his own country more thickly with shadows,—giant shadows, his own seemed to shrink into itself, and to allot more than a due amount of relative importance to surrounding objects, but now, in the stillness of the day, it was otherwise, everything appeared trifling and of small moment; he saw cities and hamlets in the distance, but the distance seemed to diminish them into mere collections of toy edifices; within their walls, silent and distant as they seemed, the busy hum of life, the joys and sorrows of the world, the passions of mankind, the bride and the bridegroom, the new born infant, and the not yet cold corpse, love, hope, sin, repentance, despair, were assuredly rife as of old, yet it seemed to him to be a mere pigmy spectacle, perched on a desolate and objectless plain of no great size or consideration, and very dusty moreover; within a few hundred yards lay enemies, who outnumbered the ranks of his own friends by fifty to one, odds against which even the recklessness of British enterprise in the East had never flung him before, and whose dense mass it most probably in a few hours more would be necessary to clear himself a way with the sabre, or die in the saddle; instead of all this he took no thought, he held the swarming children of the desert, armed to take his life, as things of no account; even of his own sleeping friends he thought little, mankind had lost much of its value in his eyes, and he much wondered, as he gauged and measured the dwellers in the earth, to think of what small materials that earth of so cherish is made, and for what a very petty mischievous creature, unyielding, selfish, ungrateful, and unworthy, a hand out of sight and out of comprehension spreads the fair banquet of nature,—and from that he passed to the consideration of how very well that banquet is spread, that is to say, he began to think what a very sunshiny sort of thing life would be—with Clara Hastings.

This was a very proper idea of his, just the sort of idea that ought to be present at all convenient times and seasons in the minds of all young men, who have not provided the sun of their existence with a moon to reflect back the light of its own smiles; and had our hero indulged in this reflection in proper time and place, it is impossible to say where they might have led him, but unhappily the time and place were unsuitable, and just as he was arriving at the conclusion, that he really began to feel himself entitled to put in his claims to the enjoyment of something of the sort, his reverie was itself brought to an abrupt termination by the whizzing of a musket-ball a great deal too close to his head to be pleasant, and the visions of love fled at once before the stern realities of battle. It seemed that one of the Fellahs had crept up on foot, to within about a hundred yards of the dilapidated wall, which gave the Europeans a temporary shelter, concealing himself by the inequalities of the ground, and finally, under cover of a broken

wall, whether with a view of rousing them, and sending them again out into the plain, where an attack might be made with a better prospect of success, or from sheer mischief, had taken a shot at our hero, which was extremely near closing his career without further ceremony on the spot.

Whatever his motive was, its effect was all he could have wished. The report of fire-arms is always to be treated with respect, when they are known to be loaded with ball. The whole party started to their feet, and as they were completely disturbed, and not likely to derive much benefit from additional rest, they soon after set forth once more on their dangerous way, and, as before, the instant they got into motion their pursuers also followed, hovering about at a respectful distance, yet seeming hardly nerved to attack. For a few miles this continued, but as they approached the territories of another tribe, and the prospect of their prey escaping them altogether became not only a possible matter, but one exceedingly probable, to the probability of which every moment of time that passed, and every yard of ground that was traversed, added most materially, the Fellahs closed nearer and nearer, their recklessness increasing, till it became almost desperation, and their abusive language, expressive gestures, and wild display of horsemanship, forming a strange contrast with the calm and warlike patience which the small party, round which the whirlwind of savage passions was foaming and boiling, steadily pursued its way, not indeed unconcerned or insensible of its danger, but yet undaunted.

The patience and forbearance of the Europeans, was, however, as is almost universally the case with savages, mistaken for fear; they, who are in the habit of preceding every act of violence, by the most frantic gesticulations, and the most violent attempts at intimidation, cannot understand the calmness with which an Englishman endures and endures insult and outrage of every description, until the moment arrives for striking, when, to their infinite astonishment, he suddenly strikes out like a demon. So it was, that they gradually acquired assurance to come nearer and nearer, and at last, eight or nine of them, evidently persons of consideration, separating themselves from the rest for the purpose of taking better aim, opened the affair in earnest. Their plan was carefully prepared and cautiously executed; to get possession of the persons of the travellers without taking life was the great object of the assailants, for they were well aware that though the inveteracy of their own blood feuds did not exist, the life of an European could not be meddled with with safety, and almost before their plan of attack had developed itself, it was in a great measure successful. Carefully selecting the horses as marks, they poured in a sudden but well directed fire, and the next instant it was found that every horse in the party was wounded, two so severely, as to necessitate the abandoning of them. No man had as yet been hit, but the balls had whizzed through the midst of them; the affair was commenced, and circumstances, as usual, took the matter in hand without much regard to plans and orders; no eruptive disorder in the world is half so contagious as the outbreak of fire-arms, O'Driscoll's musket came to his shoulder with the speed of lightning, and scarcely were the Arabs well aware of the successful

ing of their attack, ere a bright streak of fire glanced with its answer ; a whizzing sound passed over the dry soil of the desert, a venerable sheikh rolled over in his blood. For one moment analysis seemed to seize the children of the wilderness, every man leaning on his weapon, or sat motionless and apparently breathless on his horse ; whilst a swarthy cavalier, to whom all deferred, and who was probably the next of kin to the wounded man, and consequently bound to avenge him if killed, dismounted to ascertain the nature of the injury he had received.

There were a few moments of anxious suspense, as he bent over the stricken body,—none of the Arabs moved ;—even the English party, whom every instant of time was precious, stood still for the moment gazed upon the two :—suddenly the young man started to his feet, his features distorted with passion, a wild, but mournful cry, from his quivering lips, was answered by a yell of ungovernable ferocity from his fierce companions, for the old man was already gone to his account, the next instant, the avenger of blood was in the saddle. One angry glance of reproach did Lord de Creci cast at the hot-headed Irishman whose hastiness had brought on this terrible crisis, but he said nothing ; as no time for talking, no time for anything but action ; instinctively they closed up together, and, as if seeing that in a personal combat, he was to hand with such overwhelming numbers, their chances of escape would be small indeed, they all with one accord dismounted, in order to direct such an accuracy of fire as would make it impossible for their assailants to close with them. Their warlike qualities were speedily put to the test ; on came the Arabs in utter confusion, but with the most recklessness ; at first horsemen and footmen were mingled, but horses speedily drew to the front, and closing from both flanks, bore down in as dense a body as Arab cavalry ever form, upon the devoted band before them :—but that little band did not shrink or yield ; any delay like hesitation would, now that the battle had commenced, have been fatal ; there was nothing for it but stout hard fighting, and they pressed up their little line, and looked the danger full in the face.

It was no child's play ; there were probably not much less than two hundred horsemen in that enraged body, every man born wild, come from wild ancestors, with forty centuries of wildness for an inheritance, little else save the arms he bore, arms which it was a point of honour to sell as of religion to steep in the blood of the infidels before him, he had slain his chief ; the trampling of their hoofs shook the earth, the dissonant outcries rent the air, thick volumes of dust rolled up behind the flashing of fire and steel, like clouds from which the lightning has parted ; on they came in their wild desert courage and wilder desert war, and as the thundering mass flung itself with a hoarse roar of battle upon the little band, that the fierce warriors thought they could trample under foot like grass ;—down went man and horse before the deadly and deadly fire of the West, and amidst the clatter of musketry, clash of falling arms, the yells of the wounded, and the struggles of rearing horses and entangled men—the body of the assailants, when, baffled, and repulsed, opened out to the right and left, and rapidly galloped out of range.

The fire of the Europeans, few as their numbers and their arms were, had been most deadly, for the Arabs had come so close as to bring the pistols into effective use, several men and horses were wounded, one or two who lay on the ground were to all appearance never to rise again; furious as the assailants were they had yet received a salutary lesson, they had learned that there is a stillness of courage, as well as a stillness of fear, there is the crouching of the hound under the lash and a crouching of the tiger for his spring; the sudden change from the most perfect quiescence to the most deadly resistance, which now appeared to them but as part of the universal madness of the Franks, was not the less fearful for being, according to their ways of thinking, unintelligible; and when the party moved on, as it did the instant it had shaken off the attack, they did not molest it; but, collecting round the bodies of their fallen comrades, seemed busy in administering to their wants or lamenting their loss.

"We must push on," said Lord de Creci, "we shall have them on us in a short time again; it is quite out of the question their bearing this, they must attack again, or their characters will be gone among their neighbours, and their very existence as a tribe may be compromised."

It was however not so. The Arabs seemed dispirited, they attacked no more that day, and the party pursued their march in safety till night fall. They encamped as usual; the watch was set, and from the distance traversed some hopes were entertained that the danger was passed, and the two sailors being on watch, they all lay down to rest;—but what the collective anger of the tribe was unequal to, the individual courage of one man effected. A solitary Fellah, probably one who had suffered the loss of some very near relative, contrived to evade the watchfulness of the sentry, and crept up so close to the party that he had reached within a few yards of them without attracting any notice. Harry was the only individual whose face happened to be turned in that direction, half sleeping, half waking, he fancied in his doze that he saw something suspicious, a something in motion he did not exactly know what, and just as his waking faculties had begun to concentrate themselves upon the doubtful object, it made a rapid serpent-like movement upon Lord de Creci, the broad Arab knife gleamed for a moment over his slumbering form, then descended, and the Earl rolled heavily over on the other side, with a deep groan. Before the assassin could repeat the blow, Harry, thoroughly awakened, had sprung to his feet, and with the instinct of the moment, seizing the carbine that lay by him, clubbed it and struck down the intruder, the stock shivered into splinters in his grasp, the barrel remained in his hand, and the butt fell to the ground bespattered with brains and blood.

THE PROPERTY
OF
NEW
SOCIETY



CHAPTER XXXVII.

FEVER. What a host of sad images arise at that simple word; what grisly spectres glide from the darkness of the charnel or the gloom of its porch, the death chamber, at its resistless spell. Where is the sanctuary it invades not? who can say to it, 'Hither thou mayest not come?'

FEVER. The strong man struck down in the fulness of his strength and the pride of his heart; the rude health that yesterday was his reliance now turned rebelliously against himself; restless yet languid, chilly yet parched, motionless without repose, and anxious without the power of thinking; arrested, as it were, in his career through the world, stopped, stayed, whilst all others go on their way rejoicing; there is no advance for the sick man, all projects of ambition, love, hope, pride, pleasure, checked, till the bodiless visitor shall have run his weary course and taken his ghastly pleasure in the bones and the sinews, the flesh and the blood, the body and the mind of the sick man.

FEVER. The delicate girl with a secret joy and a secret sorrow, a secret hope and a secret fear gnawing at her heart, an image there enshrined, a lofty haughty image that yet smiles sweetly upon her, one to be caressed and leaned against and clung to,—can the subtle spirit find food in that gentle form? Yes, the anxious countenance, the sunken eye, the murmured thanks for slight services, the shrinking from uncomplained-of pain, the light shiver, the half suppressed sigh, the token of dejection in the eyelid, such is the tribute that its gentle subject pays to the dark king, that rides on the light breezes of summer, invisible, but not to be questioned, inaudible, but not to be disobeyed, the queller of high hearts, before whose very name the nations tremble and die.

FEVER. Hark to the ravings of despairing guilt, the involuntary summons of the parting soul for the bad deeds of other days, to come into the court, whence there is no appeal, and give testimony against itself; the muttered protest of long outraged, long suppressed conscience, as it bids farewell to this world, on the threshold of another,—a better? it is a terrible question, the soul asks itself, in faltering accents that are soon to be stifled for ever,—hours long past return once more, dark with sin and death, loaded with the weight of golden occasions lost, of a reckless course of ill-living, of the following the devices and desires of a wicked heart, of the leaving undone the things that ought to have been done and the doing of the things that ought not to have been done, truly of no health in us. Comes back Time so arrayed as it passes into Eternity?

FEVER. The poor man's friend, the true vicar of Heaven upon the earth, he who has learned the great lesson betimes, that he who loves his neighbour as himself is not far from the kingdom of God, must he

too bow before the sceptre of death, his hair is not yet silvered, his days are not yet full; alas! they are numbered, but their tale is written in the golden characters that record the deeds of him who has lived not in vain, sunny visions are opening a path away and away upwards, for the spirit that is passing, bright apparitions of long forgotten kindnesses, charities, gifts, are springing from their slumber of other years, are clustering round his parting soul, to bear it to its reward, the very words and looks of brotherly love, that he scattered of old from the overflows of the kindly heart, have now taken form and stature; poor men's prayers, widow's blessings, orphan's thanks, are now THINGS, endowed with might and majesty and beauty, heralds to marshal the faithful spirit on its way, and to usher it to its rest through the portal of eternity. What is the dimming eye, the sinking cheek, the wasted flesh, it is but the rusting of the chain, the captive will soon be free, his mind, on his own account, is calm, for faith is lord there, and hope and trust are not far off; a few days, a few hours, a few minutes will open to him the life he has lived for, but, alas! alas! for those he leaves behind, a widow maddening in her agony, fatherless children, one so young as not to know its loss,—there is ever bitterness in death.

FEVER. The lordly chamber, the coronetted bed with its damask curtains, its purple and fine linen, and the haughty nobleman writhing in the grasp of the monster, regardless alike of pomp and state, and thinking only whether a change from this side to that would give him ease, peevishly calling to his ready attendants to change his posture, and changing it in vain. For years his senses have been trained, refined, sharpened to appreciate pleasure, and now in a bitter mockery, they are inflicting on him the exquisite sensations of pain, that his delicate organization has been prepared to receive. It is a glorious summer's day, a day alike for the animal enjoyment of high spirits, or the intellectual sunshine of the soul, hill and valley spread themselves before his eyes, beyond them the sea, his horses dose in their stalls, his yacht slumbers upon her shadow, and he must toss upon his sick bed. The treasures of men's minds lie untouched on the shelves of the library, but he cannot collect his thoughts to read; statues and pictures are around, but his eyes will not bear the light; the room is darkened, and through its sepulchral gloom, yonder marble Venus seems like a pale ghost beckoning him away;—where? to the grave? Impossible: he accuses nature, the earth, the air, and the water; he thinks not of accusing his own long sustained course of indulgence; his cook yawns now, for those costly entrees are forbidden, they have done their work; and the kitchen maid can make water gruel. How long will he want even that?

FEVER. A squalid hovel, whose broken windows, partly stopped with a torn hat admit, not the free breezes of heaven, but the pestilential fumes from the reeking heaps of refuse, that the callous indifference of those in high places suffers to accumulate, sweltering and slaying about the dwellings of the helpless, a filthy rug and a ragged coverlet, vermin on the dryrotted bed, and scraps of rejected eatables, potatoe skins, and well picked bones, on the mouldering floor, a broken tea cup for medicine, a wooden platter for food, a cracked bottle for

in, and a half dressed slattern for nurse ; an empty grate for fire ; no money to buy *life* with, and no strength to earn money with, a heart ardened by the ill usage of a neglectful world ; a soul dimly enlightened by the light of the gospel, a spirit uncheered by hope, a mind nelevated by education, a body enfeebled by disease, icy cold by the ery nature of the disorder, without a spark of fire, or as much as a ap of any warm liquid, one cheering influence within or without :— ere is Fever in its glory ; here the grim spectre revels, and thus, want and misery, and filth, and cold, and hopelessness, does Fever de forth on the wings of the winds, to ravage the nations. This the image in which she is ever present to the millions, and millions at earn their bread by the sweat of the brow, not with friends and comforts, and fit food, and fit medicines, careful attendance and skilful eatment ;—but thus, bare, ghastly, unchecked and deadly. FEVER, hat a load of human misery, and widowhood and orphanage does that ttle word bear, for it is by the terrible agency of fever, that one half f the human race meet death.

Once again, FEVER, a pale girl, half broken-hearted by the weight of false accusation, lies in a distant chamber in a lordly castle, and waits the course of the ravager, counting the heavy hours that must lapse till her mother that bore her should arrive, perhaps to see her lie. It was late at night when Mrs. Hastings did arrive, and she was immediately shewn into the presence of the Marchioness, from whom he learned the cause of the course that that lady had felt herself comelled to take towards Clara ; but unhappily she had learned something more. Uneasy in her mind, as to the justice of her conduct, she had aused a stricter inquiry to be made, and as this of course involved the xamination of Mrs. Gubbins, and of the gypsey, both those peronages in self-defence, and also under the same baneful influence hat was the cause of all the mischief, concurred in asserting, the one, hat Clara had several times granted interviews to Mr. Fitzgerald at her house, the other that she had repeatedly carried notes and messages between them ; of course there was no one to contradict this ;—on the contrary, there were several witnesses of her first visit to the cottage, the circumstances attending which had been stamped in their recollection, by the mischievous cunning with which Sir Thomas Horton had drawn their attention to its name ; so that of Clara's dismissal, which had before appeared to Lady Ellesmere an act of necessary severity, very painful indeed, but still in her eyes necessary, she now thought little, considering it a just and proper consequence of the young lady's, to say the least, most blameable indiscretion. Mrs. Hastings, without believing one word of the story, could not contradict it ; she listened in haughty silence, and then requested that she might be conducted to her daughter. Then, however, the first word that Clara spoke seemed at once to account for the whole transaction, all mystery vanished, and the whole truth seemed to flash clearly and distinctly on her mind, when Clara, as her mother flung herself upon her neck, murmured : "Oh that dreadful Sir Thomas Horton."

Mrs. Hastings' first impulse was to seek Sir Thomas, charge him

with falsehood, appeal for confirmation of her charge, to his long cherished hatred against her, and in short resist to the utmost the injurious imputation he had unhappily succeeded in fixing upon her daughter; but she soon found that *then* at all events, no such energetic course could be attempted, Clara's own situation required the most earnest and watchful care; in fact her mother saw with a horror-stricken, yet scarcely believing eye, that she was sinking fast into a state of exhaustion, whence it seemed hardly probable that she would recover. It is not necessary to detail the various conversations that passed during the gloomy period between the mother and daughter, Henry's name did occur to them certainly, but they were cheerless and hopeless enough. Time passed, and with it passed the more violent symptoms of the disorder, but the weakness, the prostration, the wearing away did not pass; the aspect of the medical man became graver and graver every visit, as he saw that the elasticity of constitution that should have conducted to convalescence was not there, and dark thoughts and dark fears, fears that a mother trembles to think on, began to intrude themselves on Mrs. Hastings' troubled mind, and would not be driven away.

It was some days after her arrival, that she sat by the bed-side of her daughter, and on the other sat Lady Madelaine, who with characteristic determination, had from the first declared her disbelief in Clara's having sought the gypsy's hut with any improper motive, had announced that the friendship that had existed between them, should neither be disturbed by misapprehensions or misfortunes, or, finally when somewhat nettled by a sneer of one of the guests as to the nature of Clara's misfortunes, by falsehoods; adding to the latter epithet, the intimation that she knew a word that expressed the same sentiment just as fully in much less compass, — and had acted up to her declaration by constant attendance at the bed-side of the sufferer.

It was drawing towards evening, the last gleams of the setting sun came rich and cheerful through the window of the sick room; the landscape was bright with the hues of autumn, the evening breeze came up from the fields loaded with the hum of harvest, the cheerful sound of cheerful labour, all seemed exulting without, but these sights and sounds were lost as they passed that casement, for hearts were breaking within; the mother, the daughter, and the unchanging friend sat there silent and thoughtful, and upon this occasion, without communicating their thoughts to one another, it so happened that the musings of all three took the same channel, — they were all thinking of Sir Thomas Horton, his malignancy, and how it might be possible to defeat it. Lady Madelaine's countenance changed from her customary gentle expression, with the angry thoughts that were passing in her mind her lips were compressed, her brow was knit, her eyes acquired an expression of resolute sternness, more energetic than the flashing of momentary irritation, a deep concentrated energy seemed to speak from her aspect, and she looked for the moment more like an Amazonian princess, preparing to lead her warlike virgins to battle, than the kind gentle-hearted creature that she really was. Mrs. Hastings had fixed

her eyes upon her countenance, there was that in it that unaccountably even to herself, rivetted her attention, and for some time she sat wondering what could be the mysterious spell that fascinated her in the countenance of Lady Madelaine, and prevented her taking her eyes off it,—it seemed like a dream, a sad yet not altogether unpleasing dream, and at last she turned away with a low sigh, and once more looked upon her suffering daughter. A change had already taken place in her aspect, the colour had disappeared from her cheeks, her white lips moved convulsively, involuntarily, and without sound issuing from them, her eye was dimmed, lustreless, soulless, with a deadly feeling of horror, her mother watched the eyelid as its contractions, gradually dying away, came at longer and longer intervals, faltered and ceased, her breathing became fainter and fainter, till at last she breathed no more,—after a terrible interval of suspense, in all the force of its silent impressiveness, the eye fixed and glazed told its terrible tale of death.

Neither the agonized mother, nor the terrified Madelaine, could speak one word; when this blow fell, it came without warning: she had certainly been ill, very ill, but immediate danger was not apprehended, and it found them as thoroughly unprepared, as if she had been cut off suddenly by accident, in the very midst of rejoicing.

For a short space neither could convince herself that the gentle and suffering girl was really gone; but after a time, the silence became insupportable, and Lady Madelaine rising and veiling her eyes, led the bereaved mother out of the room. * * * * *

A night and a day passed heavily at Ellesmere, Mrs. Hastings had sunk almost immediately into a state of stupor, whence it had been found impossible to rouse her, she seemed as if her senses had been benumbed, or rather paralysed by the blow, she sat unconsciously twisting and untwisting a piece of string that had lain by accident on the table before her, and neither eat, drank, nor slept; and the sun went down without her uttering one word. Midnight tolled, and it seemed as if its solemn voice roused her once more to an acute sense of her situation, nature elastic even in the heaviest of sorrows, reasserted her right of guarding and cherishing her children, and a flood of tears came to her relief. She wept long and passionately, and then silently took her way towards the chamber where her lost treasure lay. Cold and pale as a marble statue lay that youthful frame that was to have been the pride, and the prop, the solace and the delight of her old age, but a strange, a fearful change had taken place already in the inanimate features she gazed upon. It has often been remarked that the countenances of the dead soon lose all the expression of asperity, that time and trouble have ploughed into the features of the living; it seems as if the traces of human cares and human passions vanish when the voice of death has said to the causes that gave rise to them,—**BE STILL!**—and has been obeyed—the aspect of untroubled childhood returns, and hope whispers to sorrow with a light tone of fond augury. In many and many a bereaved heart have these words of hope been written in characters that went down to the grave with it; but in this case it was otherwise. The expression of gentle resignation, that had

characterized poor Clara's aspect the day before, had disappeared, and had been replaced by one of a gloomy anxiety, her brow was slightly contracted, the corners of her mouth seemed unnaturally drawn down, no single feature had changed much, but still that expression of pain and uneasiness was distinctly marked, so much so that her mother started back in horror, in, if the truth must be told, superstitious horror at the change. What could it be? She had seemed to die away as gently as if she were only falling asleep, suffering and sorrow she knew before death certainly, but the last expression that had lighted up her countenance, was a calm resignation, and a gentle smile;—and her mother flung herself in an agony of despair upon the lifeless body. That agony was not left to exhaust itself,—suddenly the mourner became aware that some one else was in the room, and turning round was made sensible of the presence of Sir Thomas Horton, who stood within a few yards of her, gazing with a hideous expression of malignant exultation at the wreck he himself had made. For a few moments, the two, the bold bad man and his victim, stood face to face, and glared at one another with feelings it would be difficult to describe; the turmoil of the ungoverned passions, that were working in Sir Thomas's breast was depicted with a hideous distinctness in his distorted countenance; it was hard to say whether a savage enjoyment or a savage hatred had the mastery in that fearful picture,—whilst Mrs. Hastings' first impulse, to alarm the house and so end his unwarrantable interference, was checked by dread of his violence. She knew him well, she knew that he was perfectly capable of any violence, indeed of throttling her on the spot, for the cause of the unmanly and unaccountable malignity with which he had persecuted the helpless and unoffending girl even to death, had its origin in the acquaintance that had formerly existed between her and him. The fact was simply this, that many years ago, Mrs. Hastings then Miss Harley, whose beauty in early youth had been very striking, had been suddenly left unprotected and in a state not very far from destitution, by the death of her father, an officer in the army then serving at Malta; and young Horton, then a midshipman on board one of the ships of war stationed in the Mediterranean, and already though so young, a confirmed profligate, attracted by her beauty and encouraged by her helplessness had judged it a fit occasion for making proposals of a dishonourable character, the indignant scorn with which they had been rejected had rankled in his mind with a violence that twenty years had not abated, and thus, in revenge for his well-merited disappointment, he sought with a fatal success to destroy the peace of mind of the mother through the sides of her daughter. There are spirits in which one bad passion reigns undisputed and indisputable, such a one was that of Sir Thomas Horton,—but that was not all, a darker element yet lurked behind in his mind, whose latent power was not long in developing itself. With the recollection of all this rising like a gloomy phantom from the depths of memory before her, it is not astonishing that Mrs. Hastings felt herself oppressed with a load of absolute terror, that for a time prevented her speaking. Fear for herself was not absent, but a worse fear had possession of her mind. What business had he there? What brought him to the chamber where lay

the remains of his victim? This terrible question suggested itself to her, as his eye glared savagely upon her and then shifted uneasily to the body, and then again returned, half to meet half to avoid her fixed glance. Yet whatever agony of human passion and human terror were tearing the hearts of those two to pieces, there was one in that room that suffered yet worse than they, one that heard, yet saw not, that lived yet breathed not, that felt yet could not move, that suffered yet could not shrink,—truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Sir Thomas Horton broke that silence.

"Now," said he, in a hollow husky voice, with a deep settled expression of malignant hatred on his livid countenance, "now my time is come; for well nigh twenty years have I waited,—long years,—but for vengeance none wait in vain. I lost you once, but I found you again, now scorn repays scorn. Aye, and I have not done yet, you know not what one word from me could do yet, even though your daughter is gone, ha, ha, ha,—at—" and here he suddenly caught at a large fly that was buzzing heavily about him, and crushing the poor insect fiercely in his hand flung its remains at Mrs. Hastings' feet. "If you only had married that poor fool Marsden, my vengeance would have been complete, ha, ha! I should have provided a glorious sponsor for *his* eldest child; it would have been sport to have seen the god-father and the father—ha, ha! standing at the font, with the mother between them—hoo-hoo-hoo!"

Indignation overcame fear in Mrs. Hastings' breast and her voice was loosed. "Murderer," shrieked she with a frantic energy, "false, hellish, perjured murderer, what diabolical impulse brings you here to gloat your wolfish eyes, with the contemplation of the ruin that your own malice has wrought, your unmanly cowardly lying malice, how can you dare to look——"

"Please to draw it mild, old lady," interrupted Sir Thomas with a sneering laugh; "hard words break no bones, but they're not quite the thing, wouldn't do at Almacks for instance."

"Leave the room instantly," said Mrs. Hastings, "or I shall alarm the house; this brutal, unwarrantable, disgusting intrusion of yours shall not go unpunished; no, neither now nor hereafter, a childless widow's curse will cling to you long after your accursed bones have mouldered in your dishonoured grave,—you, the murderer of an innocent girl, aye, there is a God in heaven, a God of vengeance who will repay it."

"Go it, keep moving," said Sir Thomas, who seemed to take a demoniac pleasure in the fierce sorrow of the poor widow; and to add to her fear, by every moment making some slight change in his posture as if he were about to approach the corpse.

"Away," said she, "your presence is hateful to me, you are in my eyes a loathsome reptile, hateful, contemptible, loathsome, but yet to be feared, you have no business here,—away, I say."

"Get your daughter to repeat it," returned the Knight, an unearthly light gleaming in his eye, "tell her to speak."

"She will speak before the judgment-seat," answered Mrs. Hastings,

a cold shudder coming over her as she looked into the inscrutable eye that glared at her like that of a wild beast.

"Let her," shouted Sir Thomas, "let her! let her! she has long to wait, if she waits till then!—what?—is hell broke loose?"

His hour was come. As he spoke, Clara Hastings, with a low wailing cry, raised herself in the bed, and looked with a glassy stare full in his face, and before that terrible gaze, the last thread snapped, the last slight glimmer of reason that remained in his mind was quenched for ever; the madness, the secret of his extraordinary conduct that had from the period of his wound smouldered, half suspected in his brain, broke out with a ghastly and resistless violence, and with a wild howl he fled from that chamber, a raging and incurable maniac.

A fiery ordeal had Clara undergone during the last thirty hours; there are few terminations to our earthly career that carry more horror on their aspect than that of a premature interment, yet under this horror had she been writhing for long hours of darkness, and gloom, and chillness, and obstruction. It was a strange sight to see, in that dimly lighted chamber, the agitated mother now breaking out into a hysterical laugh, now half choked with sobbing, divesting her recovered child from the habiliments of the grave, pressing her to her breast, as if the revived daughter were a new born-babe, now ejaculating thanks to the Author of all Mercy, for bringing the lost one back from the valley of the shadow of death,—a shadow that had passed away,—now holding her at arm's length, as if to assure herself that she was really and indeed come back to bless and comfort her, that the whole scene was not a delusion, a dream, a mocking glibing dream, and once more folding in her arms the white and wan form to which warmth was now rapidly returning. But this scene was not long uninterrupted, the maniac yell that had greeted the revival of the poor girl from her trance, had rang out with a clear and fearful distinctness on the silence of the night; those who yet waked had sprung to their feet at its sound, the sleepers had been roused from their slumbers, a startled murmur ran hastily through the house, distant doors slammed, hurrying footsteps were heard along the passages, lights gleamed and glanced, eager questions received doubtful answers, bells sounded above, below, and round and round like echoes in a cavern, some low and timidly rung, others in an angry peal as if fear lent energy to the hands that pulled them; the lights thickened fast, on all sides they appeared, and disappeared, and reappeared, but they soon converged to the one point, no one could pass carelessly over the open door of the room where lay the dead,—and speedily pale lips were everywhere whispering into astonished ears, that the dead was alive,—a crowd was collected in the room, and in a few moments more Clara was removed from this chamber with all its deadly associations, and left alone with her mother, in a chamber more fitted for the living, with such light restoratives as suited her condition. During all this time she had not spoken one word, her senses had manifestly not altogether returned, a few muttered sentences first indicated returning consciousness, they became more and more coherent, a shudder passed



C. H. W. GALL

Page 284.

PROPERTY
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over her frame, and she hid her face in her mother's breast, hardly yet fully restored to life and light.

"Merciful heavens! how I have suffered," said she, "it was more than human power could bear,"—but as she commenced her sad story, she was fearfully interrupted. She paused for a moment, for a voice of horror once more came wildly on the night air, and all who heard it trembled; it was the howl of a maniac that had maddened in his guilt.

The howl of a maniac, the moan of a reasonless man, an immortal soul without guidance, crying aloud for help and finding none, wailing from out of its darkness for the light that has fled and that returns not, save to light it through the portals of the grave,—what sound of despair that the weight of earthly sorrow crushes out of sinking hearts can equal those accents of hopelessness,—and yet hideous as that ghastly cry was in its own gaunt nakedness, it came from the lips of madness, girt with yet more hideousness, for the thought that would not be driven away from the minds of those that heard it, that the reason that had just fled in the agony of superstitious terror, had been for long dark years, malice-stained, and vengeance-laden, perverted to the nourishment and gratification of a fiendish vindictiveness.

Clara, her consciousness hardly yet completely restored, her senses slowly and confusedly extricating and arraying themselves out of the chaos of suspended animation, held her breath at the sound and shuddered, a cold creeping horror stole over her hardly yet warm limbs, and instinctively she again closed her newly opened eyes; her mother started hastily to her feet, and without saying a word, bolted and double locked the door, nor was she even then content, but after a vain effort to move a heavy chest of drawers, she piled some chairs against it, and seemingly more reassured by this feeble barrier, returned to the bedside of her recovered daughter.

"The last sensation that I have a distinct recollection of," said Clara, in a low, feeble, but very earnest voice, "was a chilling anxiety and uneasiness, as if my heart were disturbed, together with a dimming of my understanding, a painful feeling that I was repeating the same sentence over and over again, with an unsuccessful attempt at connecting the words with the meaning, which always seemed to escape me, before I could complete the sentence; I felt a sort of languor, a ringing in my ears, a heavy grey damp mist pressing on my eyes, and forehead, and breast, and then I dropped insensibly off as if I were going to sleep."

"To-morrow, my love, you shall tell me all," interrupted Mrs. Hastings, "you are too weak, and too excited now; you must not exert yourself too much, you will be stronger and calmer to-morrow after a night's rest, and then—"

"No! No! No!" said Clara, earnestly, "not to-morrow, now, I *must* tell you now; it is more than my mind can support, it overbears, it oppresses, it overpowers me. I cannot bear it; you do not know what it is to have been,—to have been,—to have been, what I was, sorrow,—separation,—fear, are heavy weights to bear ALONE, when they belong to this world only; think how heavily they weigh upon the

soul—when another world is also present; think what it is to have heard unearthly words. Listen to me, now, dear mother, but for a few minutes, that I may sleep." And her mother, seeing that the sad history of the period of her trance, weighed heavily on her mind, and imperiously demanded the relief of sympathy, sat down to listen to her strange tale, that her overburdened spirit might have rest.

"I was yet not altogether asleep," continued Clara, "for I thought I slept, and suddenly I thought I woke, with a glare of light, and I fancied I lay in a rich and lofty chamber, its walls of golden glass, that gleamed and glistened in the lustre of countless lamps, its roof was mother of pearl of a tremulous brightness, its floor was of the whitest and purest marble; numbers of couches and chairs were scattered about, seemingly of tortoise-shell, inlaid with silver and gold, the bedstead on which I lay was of ivory, the curtains of the richest purple silk, all scattered over with strange and fantastic figures embroidered in pearls, a fountain was playing in a conservatory full of the most gorgeous flowers at the further end of the room, birds hopped from plant to plant, with sweet but somewhat plaintive warbling, with which the sound of a distant organ would from time to time mingle, as if to mellow them: everything seemed a vision of fairy enchantment such as I never dreamed of before;—but amidst all this beauty and glory and richness, I lay in a misery that cannot be described, it was not pain, it was far worse than pain, for, though I would have given worlds for one gasp, I could not draw breath.

"Then with a slow and shadowy change the scene melted away into a green smiling valley, the walls became the sides of hills and the skirts of woods, green banks and sprouting hedges; the ceiling dissolved into the blue sky, across which a few stray clouds were floating slowly and casting their lingering shadows upon the sides of the mountains; flowers seemed springing into life and light at my feet; birds of beauty thronged in gorgeous multitudes, and the sweet birds of song called to them from the thickets, and some came and perched close to me, the fish leaped exultingly till the gleaming water seemed alive with the flashing of light, the butterflies flitted about among the flowers, themselves winged flowers, and the bees worked cheerfully as if the sight of their bright flutterings lightened their labours; the breezes came and went, some came over violet beds, some passed through the orange groves, but they fanned my forehead in vain,—a tight band seemed fastened round it, and a stifling weight on my chest, for though I would have given worlds for one gasp, I could not draw breath; and suddenly came darkness, but a clear cold darkness, like starlight, and the place I was in turned at once to stone; there were no more green fields or bright birds, the valley was petrified, naked rocks stood round, rearing up their gaunt forms like watching giants, huge clusters of crystals of every form and size reflected back the pale cheerless light in a thousand different rays, and above all were soaring pinnacles of ice, cold colourless ice, that it froze my very heart to look at, and I felt the cold creeping over me; then as I looked round, I thought the valley narrowed, and then I saw that it was filled with tombs cut out of the living rock, carved with all manner of grotesque ornaments, and suddenly from out

of one of these came that dreadful man and glared at me, just as he did that morning he met us on the road : he came up to me and I saw that his eyes were not like the eyes of a man, they were like the eyes of a wolf, a wild wolf. Oh my God ! how I shuddered, how I strove to get away from him, but I could not ; I had no power to move,—no— I lay there, the rock held me as a magnet holds steel, and he spoke words that were of no language of this earth, yet I understood them, for they were the language of the dead ; he held a pale green stone in his hand that he called the stone of doubt, and he struck it with a knife and blood came from it, and then he dashed it angrily on the ground and then the stone shivered into a thousand pieces, and glittered for a moment like a shower of sparks, and then was there no more, but in its stead was a beautiful white flower, and I felt a hand that I had never seen place it on my breast,—but still I could not breathe, I thought I never should draw breath again ; I felt that if I could move an arm, a hand, even one single finger, that the dark spell that held me would break and the hideous dream fly away with the phantoms that it called out of the world of spirits, but that motion I could not make, not for the universe. I lay still, it was a ghastly rest, the darkness closed thick and heavy and choking over me, but still I heard, at least there was a sort of indefinite sense of words upon my ear as if the meaning came without the sound. I knew that it was Lady Madelaine urging you to leave the room, and then I felt what had befallen me, and I felt that already, whilst the life was still in me, I was numbered with the dead. Oh ! how terrible it was, the fear of death was gone, it was crushed and trampled out by a worse fear,—the fear of a living grave, all was darkness, and lifelessness and hopelessness ; motion was denied me but sense was not, and in the most acute agony of terror, I lay there despairing,—a living corpse waiting its living tomb.”

Strange words these to come out of those young lips, horrible words to come out of any lips ; yet who knows how many there may have been who *could* have uttered them, had not the tomb closed upon them yet alive ? Where ? When ? What is death ? Can man die more than he who, cold, unbreathing, pulseless, senseless, is dragged from out of the waters ; who, if left on the beach, would most assuredly never wake again, and yet to whom care and warmth, and even artificial breath, restore the life that the waves had overwhelmed. Is he dead or sleeping ? Who can tell by what subtle organization the principle of life may be preserved as undiscoverable after apparent death as before actual birth. Who ever saw the life in the egg, two seconds before the young bird within began pecking at the shell. Who sees the spirit depart, and can say, ‘the soul is fled and cannot return ?’ Who knows how much of it remains ; who can tell what the newly dead may hear, or how long the recent corpse may feel ?

Even now it seemed as if Clara was hardly restored to this world ; there was a fixedness in her eye that was horrible to look at ; there was a hollowness in her voice that seemed tuned to the undertones of the dead ; there was a solemn elevation in her language that did not ordinarily belong to it ; there was a frown upon her brow, not of anger, but rather of a painful and intense concentration of her facul-

ties, themselves strained and overworn, upon some particular object, and there was the appearance of her still being under the dominion of some strange and unearthly influence, that would not allow her to mingle once more with the ordinary affairs of life, till she had passed through a course of further probation, and fulfilled some conditions of a dark and shadowy outline, that her terrified mother could not yet conceive.

"Stay, my love," interrupted she, for terrified and perplexed as she was, by the uncontrollable impulse that seemed to compel Clara to tell her hideous story, she dreaded yet more what was to come; "stay,—rest to-night, it is too much for you."

"It is too much, mother," replied Clara, with a wild yet imploring look, praying to be allowed to do what her heart revolted at, but what she was dragged through by a power that might not be resisted.—"it is too much for me to bear, to bear alone,—I must tell it if it cost me my life:—if I do not, it will cost me my reason—it is working in my brain, and weaving madness there. Listen, listen,—it was so.—Thus I lay,—how slow the hours went,—I knew how they went, for I heard the clock strike,—hour after hour, each lagged heavily after the other, yet I shuddered to think what the next might bring. I heard people come in and go out; Lady Madelaine came in, I felt her throw herself upon my body, I felt her warm tears upon my cheek, I felt her press my cold hand,—oh, how I longed to return that pressure! but the power was denied me; I heard her murmur my name, what would I not have given to have answered it; but she was called away, and then others came in, others very different—oh those dreadful women! those horrible preparations for the grave! how they talked, even laughed—laughed whilst they were laying out a fellow-creature's body: one said I had poisoned myself:—and their hands creeping over me—no one can tell what that was:—they talked about a coffin too; it seemed as if an evil spirit was tormenting me:—what ghastly pictures presented themselves to my eyes!—gloom—corruption—the grave—the earthworm; oh horrible—horrible!"

Here her mother fell weeping on her neck, and as she clasped her in her arms, her tears were infectious; the first feeling of relief that the sufferer had experienced reached her overburdened brain; nature, oppressed, chilled, obstructed, but yet unwearied, at length found power to come to her help, and a flood of tears broke from eyes that had been held to be closed for ever—and with it the cord that bound her brain was loosened:—for the first time she really felt and knew that she had once again taken her place among her fellow creatures, and then for the first time, the bright forms of Love and Praise drove away the darkness of horror that had obscured her soul; and as the Phantom melted away in the light of returning life, mother and daughter together poured out their spirits, in humble but deep-felt thanksgivings, to the merciful Being in whose hands are the issues of life and death.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THERE was silence in the chamber that held Clara Hastings, and her mother,—a silence of deep thoughts and full hearts, in a holy scene ; the parent overjoyed, yet not unmindful of the hand that gave when most it seemed to take away ; and the restored daughter, languid indeed, faint, woeworn, and pallid, but still a living creature, spared to be blessed and bless.—What a change was there in a few short hours, a change from despair to joy, and now that at last the kindly influence of tears had prevailed to relieve her, and she had shaken off the numbing grasp of the image of death, the last of the icy fetters that had chained her spirit to the earth had melted away, and in a few minutes, she sank calmly, and almost imperceptibly into a placid slumber ; a refreshing sleep which her glad mother, who sat watching by her bedside, felt convinced, if the countenance be an index to what is passing in the mind, was disturbed by no lingering remnant of the dreamy horrors by which she had lately been overshadowed.

Still all was not yet well, evil still brooded vulture-like over her fallen fortunes ; true, the mother's eye, beaming with maternal love and gratitude, rested upon the breathing form of her daughter that had thus strangely been brought back from the realms that are peopled by the lost, but the cruel accusation that had well nigh pressed her down into an untimely grave yet remained unanswered, and as she much feared, unanswerable. Sir Thomas alone could clear the mystery, and what availed the words of a lunatic. The secret of his madness, it is to be observed, was confined to her ; for when the first yell broke in uncontrollable terror from his lips, although it was certainly the sound that first startled and roused the slumbering dwellers in the castle, still not one of them either knew whence it proceeded, or what it portended. Mrs. Hastings, indeed, who in the frenzied conversation that had passed between them almost over poor Clara's body, had marked the conquering demon first glare through his eyes, as reason melted away out of them ; who had seen madness branded upon his features as plainly as if it had been stamped with a fiery seal ; who had heard, felt, and understood his maniac howl, to express, as it were involuntarily, unwillingly, but by an impulse that might not be withstood,—"Madness is Here—Lord of All"—as plainly as if those white lips had uttered the words ; to whom an unerring voice whispered in her inmost heart, that madness was the fitting and suitable close of *his* career ; the merciful privation that furnishes him, who no longer can restrain the evil within him, with the last dread plea of freedom from the dominion of sin, she, indeed, knew that the man was mad, but she thought, and said nothing more about him, at the time that it seemed as if her daughter were hovering between death and life. Clara's condition was then too absorbing to permit her to waste a

thought upon him, nor did any of the assembled crowd pause to inquire whose voice it was that had called them forth into the midnight to see the dead return to life. Most of them had their own peculiar opinions on the subject, that is to say, most made the sort of half formed guesses that pass by the courtesy of the world for opinions; some imagined that Clara had awakened of her own accord, and had naturally enough screamed out on finding the grim preparations of which she had been the object; others who had remarked the general debility that oppressed her, when they first saw her, concluded that Mrs. Hastings must have found her struggling into life, and that her voice must have been the sound that greeted the waking of the dead; many imagined that some watcher, or person otherwise connected with the funeral obsequies had been alarmed, and it was no wonder that it should call forth some more than usually vehement token of surprise; others again, and perhaps this was the more numerous class, thought nothing at all about it, and did not attempt to account for it; the event of the night filled all their minds,—strange sights, and strange sounds seemed at home in the castle, and even his second yell, that had so terrified Mrs. Hastings, who knew what it really was, did not attract much notice from others; people supposed that some one more timorous than the rest, could not shake off the excited feelings to which the scene had naturally given rise, and had screamed in their sleep, or waking, had been terrified by some slight cause, the nibbling of a mouse, or the hooting of an owl, for fear easily finds food to nourish it, and still more easily finds voice to express itself. The sound was not repeated again; one after one the inhabitants of Ellesmere dropped off into slumber, and the night passed without further disturbance, or farther inquiry. But if there was peace in the house, there was none in the chamber of the maniac.

The instant that he had entered his room, he locked and bolted the door, listened for a moment to assure himself that there was no pursuit, and grinding his teeth, flung his neckcloth on the ground as if seeking some object upon which to wreak his fury, stamped savagely on it and then flung up the window so angrily as to cut his hand with the glass. All without was still and calm, it was cold, but the cold fell soothingly upon his heated brow, that became, for the moment, smoother and clearer, as if his throbbing temples found rest from their hot toil in the passionless repose of the cool, fair night, that was alike without glare and without gloom, for the moon was at the full, and the solemn heaven was spangled with stars. Sir Thomas turned away and walked hastily up and down the room, muttering fierce sentences to himself, as if yet struggling with the frightful visitation that had fallen upon him. It seemed as if he was conscious that his reason was going or gone; as if an impression was on his mind, that a fiend was acquiring a mastery over his soul, and that he still maintained a mental war with the intruder, a ghastly, rending contest; such as the wild cat writhing in the talons of the vulture, wages aloft in the upper air, not for hope, but for savageness, each struggle more desperate, more convulsive in its agony, but feebler from its exhaustion. During all this time he spoke not aloud, there was no time for connecting words; IMAGES rose up

around him too thick and fast for him to give them name or place. Every object that had ever occupied his thoughts,—every idea that had ever entered his mind,—every person that he had ever seen, heard or read of,—every gloomy fancy that had ever festered in his brain,—the long array of persons, deeds, crimes, empires, faiths, systems, events, the silent prophets that point to the Future even in entering the Past, whilst they sweep, arrayed in dimness, over the troubled mirror of history,—the indistinct shadows of the giant Principles, wrapping great truths in greater errors, imperfectly understood and idolatrously worshipped, from which superstition raised false beliefs for vanished races,—the pestilences that had ravaged nations, embodied in ghastly phantoms of dim outline and cadaverous aspect, all seemed to crowd and swarm in that dark room like bats in a cavern, crossing, flitting, shifting, changing, coming and going, to bewilder him, with their chaotic countlessness till it seemed as if the spirit that guides inscrutable visitations, had summoned the universal world; all beings that have form and shape,—all existences that are invisible and matterless,—all ideas that the mind can embody,—all the phantasms that the brain can uprear, the weeds that sprout up from its rankness,—the bubbles of the earth and the powers of the air—to come and appear, that he might have ample scope and abundant room for his terrible choice, of the ONE IDEA upon which he was to set his distorting seal, and say, “Be *mine* henceforth,—be no longer Thought,—be Delusion.”

That dread choice was soon made, gradually the agitation of conflicting passions vanished from the countenance of the doomed man; his frown relaxed, the convulsive workings of his lips ceased, his eye lost its unearthly brightness and faded away into the twilight of unmeaningness; for the destroyer's work was done, the fight was over, and the horror, and the agony of the coming madness, dimly seen and half suspected, had disappeared in the triumph of the madness that was complete; the maniac's mind was at rest, for he knew not that he was a maniac.

He approached the window once more and looked out into the night, his eye shifted from star to star, and as it seemed to examine their relative position, their sizes, and their brilliancy, he nodded his head with a sort of satisfaction, as if he were pleased at finding that each was in its proper place.

“They're all right,” said he; “just as I left them before I died. —How bright they are, how beautiful! what expansion the contemplation of their infinity gives the mind! what a glorious buoyancy, as if I were floating amongst them, true, I am so; I never thought of that; but not free—there is a sound of harmony on my ear, aye that is what my old friend Shelley described so forcibly.—

'Tis the deep music of the rolling world,
Kindling within the strings of the waved air
Æolian modulations.

Aye, that is the music of the soul—opium alone produces it in the dull atmosphere of the earth;—but it comes by nature in the sky—one's old oldest friends, there they are, not one missing, not one new

one either, it is wonderful how they are kept together.—When I was a shepherd in the land of Canaan I never could keep the flocks and the herds to the same number, for one day, some were born, some would die ;—the stars never are born, nor do they ever die,—when I was alive that time—aye,—alive ! why, I'm alive now, yes—on the earth ; but not of it. What is it ? oh, ah,—I see, the double spirit is united, the life of the soul that used to dwell in the world of spirits is joined once again to its shadow that used to animate the body of the man, the soul devoted to the universe, whose earthly voice is conscience, has come to dwell with the soul devoted to itself, whose earthly voice is interest, that it may tell good from evil : truly it is a sapless stock where the root is parted from the branches, now that they are joined again it is a goodly tree.—Well, I must see what the book of destiny says.”—and he gazed upon the heavens as if studying the stars for some mystical information they might contain.

“ I do not know what it is,” said he, after a time, walking away from the window with a dissatisfied air ; “ I cannot read them as distinctly as of yore, yet surely *they* cannot change ; I do not think this climate is fit for the noble science that the great souls of old taught me, when I went into Egypt to see the pyramids built ; aye, they were great masters. It was they and they only that knew the secret of the earthly soul passing from body to body, whilst the spiritual soul remained in its appointed place to supply the heavenly essence as it was worn out ; truly, mine is well nigh exhausted in this body, it must soon be changed.”

He again approached the window, and as his eye roved among the bright myriads of the sky, one of them shot from its place, descended and was extinct. A falling star is too common an object to attract notice from a sound mind ; but the distempered fancy of the maniac immediately connected his own fate and fortunes with the meteor.

“ There's my star gone out,” muttered he ; “ that is a signal for me : I am coming, as the body falls to the ground, the spirit will rise, the invisible essence that is lighter than air, will shoot upwards far faster than yon star shot downwards through the gross atmosphere of the earth—faugh—mineral gas, vegetable exhalation, animal steam, it is sore to breathe,”—and the next minute he was half out of the window. The ground underneath was a hard gravel walk that surrounded the castle, the window was on the second floor, with two lofty stories between it and the ground, and as the wretched man looked down the black abyss into which he was about to precipitate himself, he broke into a hideous laugh.

“ I come,” said he : “ I come, not because I must, but because I will ; yet still I must, for I am called—called by a voice no man can hear, a sign in the heavens,—I come.”

“ Too whit, too-who,” came out of the dark mass of a neighbouring yew tree, the vagrant fancy of the madman invested the hooting of the owl with meaning, and his contradictory nature at once took fire.

“ Do it,” repeated he, angrily ; “ do it, I shall do nothing of the sort ! Who are you that take upon yourself to order the lord of himself to do it ?—or anything,—I shall do what seems best to me,—

go you to sleep." As he spoke he slammed down the window violently, and the rest of the night paced moodily backwards and forwards, until morning light warned him that it was time to change his evening dress for that which he wore in the day time ; he went through his toilette as usual ; his servant, when he came in, observed nothing particular in his manner, and he descended to the breakfast-room and sat quietly among the assembled guests without the slightest suspicion, on their part, that in the midst of them was a furious madman. We may here remark that the peculiar delusion which had taken possession of this unfortunate creature, the pivot, as it were, upon which his mind had turned from sanity to madness, was the idea that he had lived before and returned from the dead, and it seems not a little singular, though unhappily it is a too familiar illustration of the complete revolution or rather reversal that insanity occasions in the mind of its victim, that though the Scriptures had formed but little of the study of his life, the characters recorded in Holy Writ played the principal part in the phantasmagoria that now dazzled his brain, and he frequently imagined that he had been one of them in his former state of existence ; for he by no means confined himself to one person, but by some curious adaptation of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls to his own case, he would adopt any character that suggested itself,—chameleon-like, taking the colour of the nearest object.

How far this peculiar turn of his madness arose from the scene in which it broke out, and was occasioned by the awful revival of Clara Hastings at the very moment that, relying upon her being dead, he dared her to bear witness against him : what share in it is attributable to his own resuscitation from the apparent death by drowning which took place on the occasion of his shipwreck at Somerton ; whether the wound in the head that he received in the Burmese war, laid the foundations of his future madness, or whether he was born with the seeds of the frightful malady lying latent in his brain, waiting but fitting occasion to germinate, are questions that no man can solve. The wind that bloweth as it listeth is not more free from man's control than his own intellect.

It may be supposed that the singular occurrence of the night before formed the principal topic of conversation that occupied that meeting ; but as we have before remarked, nobody was aware of the share that he had in it ; he had regained his own room, before the house had been thoroughly roused, no one having met him in the passage, and Lady Sarah, having recollected that he did not appear during the confusion that had followed Clara's revival, thought fit to detail the whole matter for his benefit, not without a secret triumph over him ; for she felt towards him as one might feel towards an oppressor, whose victim has escaped him, and perhaps involuntarily rather let this feeling peep out more than was prudent in the manner in which she told her story ; an imprudence of which she reaped the strange fruits before the sun set. He knit his brow, and bit his lip, actions which made little impression on the young lady, who was too full of her tale to think of anything else ; but he listened patiently till it was ended.

" It is not so very uncommon a thing, that returning from the dead,"

rejoined he, as soon as she completed her story ; “ it is peculiar, because the cases are not much remarked, and commonly speaking we do not push ourselves much into notice, it is a sore subject *you know*, not that I see any reason why it should be ; but there are prejudices, it's not much liked, but by no means uncommon ; I know many instances of it,”—and, Lady Sarah, supposing that he alluded to trances that put on the appearance of death, thought the answer an odd one, oddly expressed : but did not, at the moment, pay any attention to it, and breakfast terminated amidst the discussions touching the price of corn, the identity of Swing, the duration of the ministry, the battles of the Belgians, the contest of parties, the Doncaster St. Leger, the Reform Bill, the throne of France, the state of Ireland, the general election, the Greek revolution, the Spanish question, and other games of chance then going on upon a large scale—among the gentlemen, and births, deaths, marriages, and ages of their relations, neighbours, friends, acquaintances, and others among the ladies : and when they rose from table, the organ of Destructiveness predominating among the lords of the creation, took them to the fields and the woods ; the younger ladies under the benigner influence of that of Constructiveness, betook themselves to lambswool, letter-writing, the Morning Post, the philosophy of bonnets, the philanthropy of flirtations, and other feminine recreations, suitable to their years and complexions ; the matrons, rabid with Philoprogenitiveness, plunged at once into the dark abyss, the chaos of unformed disordered elements, where nurses rule, whose geese are all swans, whose talk is of teething, whose minds are receptacles for measles, small-pox, castor oil, alphabets, young ideas, colds, rashes, a curious composition something like bread-sauce, they consider suitable to their chickens, miraculous penetration, precocious talents, various mixtures, divers powders, indescribable complaints, to say no worse ;—it was a remarkably able arrangement when tastes were served out to mankind, by which Providence gave the softer sex a fancy for nurseries and little boys ; the atmosphere of the hot bed in which, as Jonathan would say, ‘ young humans are raised,’ does not suit male lungs ; if it had been left to them, there would not have been men enough on the earth to make up a ‘ repale meeting.’ Those who were too far advanced in years to enjoy the luxury of giving birth to children, entertained themselves with giving advice to young women instead, complaining of servants and so forth ; and the business and pleasure of the house went on, as eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, went on of old—and then came the deluge, one of the largest illustrations of the good old saying, ‘ time and tide wait for no man,’ on record.

Probably it was the combination of time and tide upon a large scale on that occasion, that gave rise to the proverb which has continued true to this day ; so even good Queen Bess, in the plenitude of her power over *that* goose, the goose of all geese, to whom the geese of the Capitol are very poor geese indeed ; the glorious goose that she swallowed to the tune of Rule Britannia, and the news that her faithful subject, the Channel, had made its repast off one of the principal wild goose chases the world ever wondered at, and had just swallowed the

greater part of the Spanish Armada well peppered and powdered, even she could not control the simple nursery rhyme

Thirty days hath September.

The September of 1831 was just as punctual and precise an old bachelor as his predecessors, and retired to rest the night after the great goose day precisely as the clock struck twelve, to make room for his jolly mottle-faced boisterous successor.

'Le roi est mort,' 'Vive le roi,' was French for 'the king never dies,' in the good old days when kings were allowed to die as kings, in their beds, and government resided in statesmen, and not in stock-jobbers, and somehow or other, October with all its bullying and blustering, is to us a welcome month, it is a truly English month, what a poet would call 'a pure well of Saxon undefiled;' it has its associations, ale for instance, aldermen, dividends, nuts, fires, all sorts of comforts and luxuries, especially to the pheasants, who come of age on the first of this month, and like young heirs, elsewhere become the cynosures of neighbouring eyes, the objects of attention, which frequently end in what is technically termed "bagged," with which benevolent intention the adult male population of Ellesmere appeared in arms on the day we are now describing.

It would be a great convenience to us, if we could consistently with our character for grammar, which is dearer to us than our life, say that Lord Chorley, Sir Thomas Horton and Mr. MacGallagher paired off for the Coningsborough woods that morning; however, it is as easy to pair a triad as to quadrature a circle, so we must content ourselves with simply stating that the three gentlemen in question, proceeded soon after breakfast towards the woods surrounding the old castle, with a view of astonishing the pheasants therein residing, or as one may familiarly say, who hang out there, whom we have already noticed as being much surprised at the innocuous character of the amusement of the Coningsborough Toxophilite society. Times were changed now for the pheasants, and still more for their pursuers.

They passed on their way in silence; the young lord was meditating upon a certain jocular conversation that had passed between him and Lady Sarah, in the short interval that had elapsed between breakfast and their departure for the sports of the day,—one of those little bits of friendly sparring, that like more substantial sparring under other circumstances not unfrequently find a serious termination in a ring, that may lead to nothing and may lead to anything, but that seldom take place, without recalling to the recollection of the mimic combatants the old proverb of 'many a true word is spoken in jest.' His Lordship's mind was fully occupied thinking of this and something more, so he said nothing, at least nothing that involved an answer from his companions, in default of whose discourse, he held a very animated conversation with himself, and to say truth, it is doubtful whether he could have had a better listener. Mr. MacGallagher was also absorbed in a somewhat more abstruse question, one which puzzled a good many of the most rampant supporters of Protestant ascendancy, in those days of its decline, viz. how he might combine the most intense devotion to

the Protestant Church as by law established, in that part of the United kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, called Ireland, with a successful resistance to the payment of tithes, in his own person and estate; a problem which it did not occur to him, might by some possibility be included in the parable which sets forth the difficulty of serving two masters (naming them for the sake of explicitness), and which he ultimately solved like many others in favour of his own pocket for the time being, with more perhaps, of the wisdom of the serpent than that of the dove, for the bird would probably have known, that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and might have conjectured that what is good for tithes, cannot be very bad for rent, and it does not seem to have occurred to those gentlemen, who fancying that they might, without much harm, receive where others stole, encouraged the passive resistance to tithe, till it became successful, that although Pat is no great arithmetician he is quite equal to working out such a sum as this in Practice.

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This kept him silent, and what was passing in the mind of Sir Thomas Horton it would probably be difficult to say, for his ideas had about as much coherence as the scraps in a kaleidoscope, and the silence was not broken till they arrived at a spot, where the trampled ground, a few scattered bones, well picked and gnawed, some scraps of the litter of tinkering, a little heap of dried grass that had done duty for bed, the remains of a broken bottle or two, the black circle that marked where the fire had stood, and an universal destruction of underwood, betokened a recent gypsy encampment, being in fact the spot where the old woman—Sir Thomas' accomplice—had squatted.

"The ould gypsy has cut her stick," said Mr. MacGallagher, awaking from his vision of decimals, with a figure of speech much admired by the professors of that flowery and fruity dialect called slang, "faith and she's cut a good many of the Marquis's too," continued he looking round, "it's all fish that comes to their net, however they're gone now, joy be with them."

"Yes, they are gone," said Lord Chorley, laughing at the recollection of all that had been promised, when last he had consulted the oracle, and more especially laughing very heartily at Lady Sarah's abrupt disclaimer, when it seemed to join her lot with that of Harry Mowbray, a disclaimer which his Lordship now considered a capital joke, the more so, for its being unpremeditated,—“gone, come like shadows, so depart, we shall have no more of the learning of the Egyptians.”

"That woman is not handsome now," said Sir Thomas gravely, passing his hand over his forehead, as if with a painful effort to recal the recollection of her past charms, "no, she is not handsome now, certainly."

"You may say that when you write home to your friends," said Mr. MacGallagher, "why, Sir Thomas, the ould divil is as ugly as sin, and a great deal uglier."

"She was very sinful in her youth," said Sir Thomas.

"Divil a doubt of it, she's the mark of the baste on her, as plain as the nose on your face; she comes of a bad breed and I'll lay a shilling she isn't much better than she should be now; I wouldn't be a fat chicken in her way now for a trifle—some foul play here, eh?" said Mr. MacGallagher, significantly kicking a few bones that belonged to what certainly had been a fowl, and as certainly had not come fairly into her possession, "I'll engage she'd make a handful soon enough of anything she could lay her hands on."

"True," said Sir Thomas, taking off his hat to run his fingers through his hair, and smiling with a singular expression of self-satisfaction, which had never visited his features before, "true, she was not particular, but though she did lay violent hands upon me; I ought not to complain of it; it was certainly nothing but a 'douce violence,' indeed, I was flattered I must own, for though I was a well behaved young man, I still was not without vanity, and she was really a beautiful woman, when she took a fancy to me."

"Is it the like of her," asked Mr. MacGallagher in great astonishment, "what business had she to presume to take a fancy to you, Sir Thomas?—a cat may look at a king certainly, but—"

"A cat may look at a king,—in my time a king might not look at a cat without reverence,—a cat—one of the holy animals, one of our deities; however, at all events," said Sir Thomas, as if he were somewhat offended, and much scandalised, "if I was not a king I was a Minister of state's first Lieutenant, I was his head counsellor, his brains-carrier, and I can tell you that it is no joke where there is much of the article to be carried, he did nothing without me."

"What the devil is he driving at," asked Mr. MacGallagher of Lord Chorley, who could only reply with a shrug of the shoulders; he began to have his suspicions, and to thank Heaven most sincerely that, including the game-keeper, they were three to one:—"was he ever in Parliament, that he talks such stuff? Sure, Sir Thomas, what business has a dirty gypsey to fall in love with you?"

"A dirty gypsey," repeated Sir Thomas angrily, "is that the way that you speak of one of the principal beauties of the Court of Pharaoh; don't you know who the lady is who was enjoying a rustic excursion here for some of the summer months?"

"No," said Mr. MacGallagher opening his eyes very wide, for some gleam of the truth was beginning to dawn on him, "who is she at all, at all?"

"She is—she is—she is," said Sir Thomas, "oh, pooh, I never can remember her name, she is—you know all about her, as well as I do, at least if you learned your catechism at school, she's Potiphar's wife."

"O—h," said Mr. MacGallagher, "I see, she was a good friend to the linendraper."

"It was not linen, it was woollen," replied Sir Thomas gravely, "now, I see you know me, you have found out that I'm Joseph."

A dead silence succeeded this announcement, the gentlemen were even then not quite certain, that he was really out of his senses, they still clung to the idea that he was quizzing them, and he himself obser-

ving that there was something wrong, immediately, with the characteristic cunning of a disordered mind proceeded to draw off their attention from his own weakness.

"Come," said he, "we've had enough of this sort of thing, let us begin at the quails,—the pheasants, I mean, I *must* kill something."

"Well, I suppose *I* must kill *something* too," said Lord Chorley laughing, "or I shall never hear the end of it from Lady Sarah." The words of the young nobleman, were the same as those used by Sir Thomas Horton, but the meaning was very different.

"I think he's cracked," said Mr. MacGallagher to Lord Chorley as they entered the wood; "there he goes," for as he spoke Sir Thomas' two barrels went off in rapid succession, and the next instant they heard his voice in loud execrations at the bird that had escaped, at the gun that had missed its mark, and occasionally not without some little appearance of justice including his own eyes, to which certainly some share of the blame belonged, in his anathema. "By the powers, he's not far wrong there, he's putting the saddle on the right horse," said Mr. MacGallagher to Lord Chorley; "what ails him, that he's in such a contrairy humour this morning, do you think Miss Clara frightened him with wakening."

"It's nothing but her high spirits," said Lord Chorley, who was thinking of Lady Sarah at the moment, "she does not mean mischief."

"Who? what?" asked Mr. MacGallagher, somewhat puzzled,— "Lord save us, there he goes again, both barrels;" and indeed throughout the whole day, everything that got up, he instantly fired at; the respect for the fair sex, common upon such occasions, found no favour in his eyes, cock or hen it was all the same, bang! bang! went both barrels in rapid succession at either, the instant the bird was on the wing, but what was remarkable, with all this eagerness he did not during the whole day succeed in touching a single feather.

"You're too impatient, Sir Thomas," remarked Lord Chorley, after one of those double-barrelled discharges; "you throw away your shots."

"It is throwing away shots," returned the other sullenly, "sending them after pheasants."

"You're right there, Sir Thomas," said Mr. MacGallagher, "cocks are the only birds worth shooting—I mean cocks in earnest, for there's a cock in Tipperary that's only a cock in joke, a woodcock without feathers; he lives near Clonmel, a great friend of mine he is too, and as good a fellow as ever you saw, only a thrifle too sharp about his rents; they call him "woodcock," because he has been shot at so often, but they have not so much as winged him yet."

"What, shot at by the peasantry?" asked Lord Chorley.

"Yes, my Lord, the pacificators."

"You have a good deal of shooting in Ireland, Mr. MacGallagher?" asked Sir Thomas, with a considerable appearance of interest; "pleasant, sociable sport, in the duelling line."

"Pleasant, sociable sport, in the duelling line," repeated Mr. MacGallagher, "it's sociable sport, certainly, for no man alive can play at that game alone; but as to the pleasure, I'm thinking its a case at least

said soonest mended. Indeed, there used to be a good deal of powder burnt that way, but it's an old story now. The practice is going out along with the drinking claret, and making bulls, and the like."

"The greatest bull I ever saw, was ball-practice; but that was at Madeira," replied Sir Thomas, with an expression of countenance, that shewed clearly, that the apparent play upon words that his observation contained, was not by him intended as a witticism, or a smart saying, but the effect of the words used by Mr. MacGallagher, calling up images that had some sort of relation to them in his mind.

"I've heard of the boar of a gun, and the charge of a mad bull," began Mr. MacGallagher, with a somewhat painful attempt at keeping up the appearance of an easy mind, by an uneasy jocularity, "but as for—"

"It was some time ago now, near twenty years," interrupted Sir Thomas, without appearing to be conscious that his companion had even opened his lips upon the subject, "I was a slip of a boy, on board the Favourite, under old Robinson: it was just after the American war had broken out, and for some reason or other, it was decided between the belligerents, that Funchal should be a neutral port; but as the island itself had no power of preserving its own neutrality, a detachment of British Artillery was sent to enforce it, so that once an American merchantman got into the harbour, she was safe under the protection of the British, that is her enemy's guns. However, as Jonathan drinks a great deal of Madeira, and as he pays about six times as much for it as any one else will, of course the Madeira people were glad to see him, and accordingly there was a great Yankee trade to the island, but every trader that came had to run the gauntlet through the British cruisers. The frigate I was in was stationed off the island, to pick up what prizes she could, before they reached the harbour; but she was not to violate the neutrality,—that was in charge of the Artillery; so, whenever his Majesty's ship of war, by any chance, chased an American merchantman too close to the port, his Majesty's Royal Artillery opened a fire upon her from the batteries. I call that a practical bull."

This little narrative, which, nevertheless, was strictly true, confirmed Mr. MacGallagher in his view of Sir Thomas being somewhat inclined to indulge in eccentricities, at the moment; but he was by no means aware of the extent, or indeed of the completeness of his mental derangement. It seems so strange to hear a man, our fellow-creature, differing in no perceptible degree from ourselves, obeying apparently, the same impulses, controlled apparently, by the same laws, dressed like ourselves, free like ourselves, eating with us, and occupied in the same pursuits, talking upon familiar subjects in the same tongue, and the same tone of voice, yet at that very time separated from us by the wide gulf that yawns, invisible, but impassable between reason and unreason, that madness rarely can be detected till the terrible moment comes when the tree is known by its fruits; and Mr. MacGallagher contented himself by observing, in a confidential roar, to Lord Chorley,

"If he hasn't got his sky-scrapers set to-day, I'm very much mistaken."

"No, we had'nt so much as our royals set, the time they peppered us most," said the maniac, more as if he were thinking to himself, than addressing his auditors, "they killed two of our men that time—I'll shew you how it was. We'll suppose that you're the American coming with a cargo of salt-fish, to take in Madeira instead."

"That wouldn't be a bad exchange, any-how," muttered the representative, for the occasion, of the stars and stripes.

"You must be making all sail for the port between the trees here, and Lord Chorley is giving chase, like the Favourite, firing into you as fast as he can blaze away."

"God preserve us," said Mr. MacGallagher, who now began to entertain some exceedingly serious apprehensions; "hadn't you better be the Yankee yourself; sure you know more about say manyouvers than I do."

"No," said Sir Thomas; "I'll shew you how the artillery on the batteries behaved;—they made pretty good practice;—some of the shots did come on board."

"Let's wait till after luncheon," said Mr. MacGallagher, inwardly determining that some steps should be taken by that time at all events, to ascertain whether the strange creature was really deranged himself, or mystifying them: "it's ill playing at sailors on an empty stomach."

"True, it does lead to inconvenient consequences," replied Sir Thomas, smiling significantly: and it was fortunate that the excuse satisfied him at the moment, for in the peculiar condition in which his mind then was, had a convenient, as well as a suggestive opportunity offered, he would most unquestionably have shot one or both of them; and they returned to the house in comparative silence, interrupted by a sporting offer of Sir Thomas's of five to four, that the cholera reached England before Christmas, and even that it landed north of the Humber, which Mr. MacGallagher declined, observing, that if it were typhus, or small-pox, any decent sickness, that would sweep a country side in the regular way, and at the proper time, he might know a little about it, but he had no idea of risking his money about such a mischievous, outlandish vagabond as cholera;—and they reached the house without doing any business, and not likely to do any pleasure for half an hour, for it wanted that much time to luncheon. As they entered the hall, they heard Lady Sarah singing in the music-room an air, which having since been condemned after a patient trial to the usual fate that awaits popularity of its order in this country, viz. capital punishment on the Barrel-organs, has been ground out of public endurance long ago, but then was not so very hacknied, being in short no other than 'I'd be a butterfly,' an air, with respect to which many of her admirers were accustomed to observe, that if that were her wish, she was happy above all others in its being as fully indulged as circumstances admitted of. Lord Chorley bit his lips,—seemed irresolute,—made a motion as if he were about to enter the room,—looked at his hands, as if he wished they were not quite so black with powder,—and finally, seeing that Sir Thomas was entering the room, went up stairs to wash them.

“ I'd be a butterfly,
Born in a bower,
Where roses and lilies
And violets—”

sang Lady Sarah, and seeing Sir Thomas, for whom she had no particular fancy, enter, she stopped in her song, and closed the instrument.

“ Pray continue singing, Lady Sarah,” said the knight; “ you have no idea how sweet it is to my ears.”

“ What! sweeter than the popping of guns, and the rustling of pheasants' wings, Sir Thomas,” said the lady; “ pleasanter than killing those poor birds; no, no, that is not credible.”

“ By the bones of my father it is,” said Sir Thomas;—and Lady Sarah looked at him with some surprise, for she knew that there was some mystery about his parentage, and was much astonished at hearing him allude to it; she was ignorant of the delusion under which he adopted a form of asseveration which has been used in the East since the earliest times,—but the next moment his mind took another turn; “ besides I have killed *nothing* yet; would you really wish to be a butterfly?” asked he.

“ Yes, if I were a chrysalis, perhaps I might,” answered she, laughing at his apparent gravity; “ better to flutter free and uncontrolled through the open air, than be stifled in the folds that the worm spun.”

“ Nothing is easier,” said he; “ the smallest opening suffices to let the butterfly out, the worm you know preys upon what remains, but the spirit is free;”—he looked round the room with a singular expression of mixed cunning and cruelty, that made Lady Sarah feel for the first time somewhat uneasy; “ you know the allegory,” continued he, “ the beautiful mythological butterfly, Psyche, she, you know, personifies the soul, it is a lovely conception, the soul released from its encumbrances,—though moderns look upon it in quite a different point of view,—they represent it black,—gloomy,—an end instead of a beginning, what the ancients called Psyche, they call death.”

The truth, the horrible truth now flashed upon Lady Sarah's mind, and the strange significance of his previous language, as well as of what he had said in the morning, which she now for the first time really understood, confirmed her in the frightful conviction, that she was alone with, and in the power of, a maniac, whose insane desire to take her life could no longer be doubtful, she sprung suddenly to the bell, but it was out of order, the rope parted in her hand, and as it fell to the floor, it afforded the very instrument of destruction that the madman had been seeking.

“ The very thing,” muttered he; “ the modern instrument of release in her own native island—the bowstring;”—and the next moment Lady Sarah was fast pinned in his grasp, with his hand over her mouth, to prevent her cries being heard.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THERE are no deserts without an Oasis ; there are no *natures*, however harsh they may be originally, or in after life *hardened* by the annealing process of roughing it through the world, through which few pass without scars or scratches, that have not some little gentleness remaining, as it were a solitary link to connect them with the mother that bore them, and the children that may come after them. We have seen that Hastings was not altogether unhumanised, in the kindness with which he had been in the habit of treating the poor New Zealand girl, whom the custom of that country had suffered to supply undegraded the place of a wife to him, and indeed, to say truth, his kindness to her had not ceased when it was no longer to be repaid by her smiles ; there seemed to be still a sparkle of high-mindedness, rough and half savage, obscured indeed, but not yet extinguished, smouldering in his gloomy disposition, that would gleam out for a time and then lie hidden, till again called forth by something that appealed to his better feelings, and in the case of this girl, he did all he could to make her future lot happy, or at all events, independent, by depositing in the hands of one of the Missionaries, on whom he could depend, such a sum of money as was riches to the simple savage, and though not very large in itself, was, proportionately to his means, a sum that many a rich man (who would have considered the rough and homely sailor, even without reference to his crimes, a very vulgar sea monster), would have hesitated to settle as a dower on his lawful wife. He seemed to experience a necessity of attaching himself to something, and in coming round the Horn, he had taken a fancy to a boy who had been left an orphan out in New South Wales, a short time before, and was working his way home in the Albatross. The boy was delicate in form and health, and had that softness of manners that is sometimes to be found among those who are brought up exclusively among women, as was his case ; for he had remained all his life with a doting aunt and girl cousins, till his eleventh year, when his father, considering that it was time he should begin learning how to earn his bread, took him to sea, and being engaged in a voyage in the Pacific, died on ship-board, leaving the lad, who was then about fourteen years old, small and weak for his age, parentless and penniless, and happy beyond measure to be allowed to work his passage home. He had shipped on board the Albatross almost immediately after his father's death, and not many weeks before she sailed.

Though his recent loss would often cast a shade of sadness across his plain but not displeasing features, it did not cause him to shrink from his duty, or to indulge in useless and misplaced repinings. He was a willing, high-couraged boy, that sculked from no work either on

deck or aloft ; if there was rigging to be coiled, or the decks to be swabbed, a mast to be slushed, or an odd job to be done, Tom Wilson was the first to start for it and do it, whether ordered or not ; he was ever first out to the yard-arm in furling, and rather inclined to maintain his post as far as he could in reefing ; he skipped up the rigging when it blew fresh with the agility of a monkey, and in light winds took his spell at the helm, with the gravity of Jacko's confederate in civilised life, a bear ; he could sing a good song when he chose, and take a joke when any one else chose, in consequence of all which accomplishments, he was soon remarked by the officers as a promising lad, besides being a sort of favourite among the crew ; however, still he was not happy ; there were no boys of his own age on board, and he felt the want of companionship, though the crew in their rough manner liked him, he did not like their rough manner, or their rough selves ; the home sickness too was heavy upon him, and though a delicate boy would here probably have found little favour in Hastings' eyes, there being no time allowed for sentiment on board-ship, according to the ordinary merchant's articles, still the very mildness of the boy, when joined with readiness to do his duty, and freedom from anything like timidity, was precisely the sort of disposition that pleased him, and the youth insensibly attached himself more and more to his moody protector. He wanted a protector indeed, for his health was failing him ; he had stood up pretty well in the rough work round the Horn, probably the excitement of constant action supported him, whilst the bracing air of the high latitudes gave him life and energy, but all that disappeared during a few days that they were becalmed under the line ; —he grew listless and careless,—his activity was gone ;—he seemed to loathe his food,—and the morning after the appearance of the *Corpus Sancti*, his condition attracted Hastings' notice. It was just about daybreak ; it seemed as if huge grey streaks, hardly yet of light but of a thinner darkness, were coming up out of the sea on the eastern horizon, climbing up slowly one after the other, with a motion that, like the hands of a watch, was not to be detected by the eye, though it was clearly perceptible to the mind, each broader and clearer than that which preceded it, casting an indistinct light upon the waste of waters, a tremulous lustre that grew upon the face of the deep, whose troubled surface was not yet free from the gloomy shadows of the night, for though the wind was gone down, the sea was not ; there was still a heavy swell, a wearying heaving and tossing, and the ship rolled now even more than when the squall struck her. The hands had been on deck the greater part of the night, but as the gale moderated, the starboard watch had been sent to their berths at four o'clock, and as Hastings took a last look at the deck before he went below, he remarked that young Wilson, instead of turning in with his watch, as he ought to have done, had huddled himself up under the lee side of the long boat, as if he were making himself up for a nap there till the day's work should begin.

There is a something in the dawn at sea, before the bustle of washing the decks dissipates it, that has a peculiar effect upon the mind, there is a feeling of utter loneliness as the eye traverses the horizon, and

sees nothing but the unbroken expanse of waters, themselves but dimly visible in the light that is creeping over the sea; the sun itself, that the wanderer on the deep, shivering with cold, as yet uncheered by his beams, expects certainly to see soon, but does not yet see, seems to be hidden behind the east, unseen and alone, the one gigantic personification of loneliness; there is a feeling too that can hardly be called awe, still less superstition, that is not exactly foreboding, nor yet regret, (for who is there that has not *something* to regret) it is none of these things, but it is an aptitude for any or all of them, it seems as if nature became one colossal temple, within whose fane, boundless yet full of promise, mankind might beg a blessing upon the labours of the coming day, and those who have experienced this feeling during the stately advance of the morning, can readily understand why the nations so early and easily bent in devout error before the sun. Perhaps in Hastings' mind, the influence of the hour was strengthened by some superstitious uneasiness about the meteor, which had for the moment even quelled his reckless hardihood,—perhaps a late repentance was softening his spirit, but whatever cause was at work in his breast, he looked compassionately at the fragile form that was nestling in that imperfect shelter that the boat afforded, and his heart yearned towards the boy.

"Hollo, my lad," said he. "why don't you turn in? the starboardlines are gone below."

"I'd rather stay here, if you please, Sir," said the lad, touching his cap; "I'm not well, and the heat, and the smell below is too much for me."

"They'll be washing the decks soon," said the chief mate, who had now taken charge of the ship.

"I'll lend a hand when they do, Sir," replied the boy.

"Well said, young un'," said the mate, taking a glance at the increasing light, "let him stay, no danger of moon-blindness now."

"Hopkins," said the captain, with his head half way out of the hatchway, "you may clap on now, set the topgallant-sails."

"Ay, ay, Sir," returned the mate; and Hastings seized the opportunity of calling the captain's attention to young Wilson's evident illness; the skipper looked at the boy for a few moments.

"He does look poorly," said he, "I'm blow'd if he does'nt."

"He'll never mend for'ard there in the fore-castle, Sir," said Hastings, "the bilgewater and the crowd are enough to poison a horse."

"Well," returned the other, commencing backing himself down the hatchway, "nobody ships for nurse you know, on board a merchantman, but there's that cabin that was bulkheaded off for a saleroom, if you choose to look after him, he can sleep on the boxes there. they'll make a snug berth enough, and I don't expect ghosts on board." The skipper had by this time reached his own cabin; and these last words, as they were spoken from below, sounded very much as if a ghost were announcing his arrival on board; they suggested a recollection of Hamlet to Hastings' mind, that was by no means pleasant for the moment; but it was getting late in the morning, he had to turn out at eight o'clock to take his watch, and sending the lad forward for his bedding,

* S a i l

he went below. As he settled the boxes, so as to make a sort of rude bed-place for young Wilson, he thought that he observed a disagreeable smell from one of them, but such things not being particular rarities on board ship, he took no further notice of it; the youngster did not remark it, for what with fatigue, sleeplessness, and illness, he was completely exhausted, and dropped off asleep the very instant he lay down; though deep heavy snoring, is not commonly a sound that finds much favour in the ears of the hearers, Hastings, in this instance, derived as much pleasure from hearing it, as he was turning into his own berth, as almost any other sound could have afforded him, and bodily weariness overcoming mental disquietude, he himself in a few minutes more gave a still further token of his approbation of the music by joining in the concert.

Ting-ting—ting-ting—ting-ting—ting. "All starboardlines ahoy, do you hear the news there below? seven bells." The watch below tumbled hastily out, and came on deck; they were soon crowded about the galley getting their breakfasts; Hastings also came for his, and bringing up young Wilson's tin, received the compound of "water bewitched and tea begrudged" that constituted his breakfast, and carried it below that he might have it by him when he awoke. He again observed the same curious odour that had attracted his notice, but stronger yet, as if it had been brought more out by the animal heat of the lad sleeping in the cabin; the boy woke when he went below, but was still clearly too weak to be of the least use on deck, so he desired him not to come up till he had had his spell of sleep out, and having hastily swallowed his own meal, he returned to the deck.

Eight bells—the breakfasts were hastily finished, the tins put away, all men jumped to their feet, the mate looked at Hastings, as much as to say, 'now for you.' The last bell had hardly struck, before the first man for the helm had taken his place behind the steersman, with his hands in the spokes, that he might have command of the wheel before the other let go.

"North-north-east," said the old steersman, indicating the course to be steered.

"North-north-east it is," repeated the new one; and the larboard watch, now relieved, went below, and right glad the poor wet weary sleepy sailors were, to dive even into the black close noisome hole of a fore-castle, in which they resided, in spite of the bright sun that made the awakened ocean glimmer like a rolling sheet of molten silver, for they had been on deck ever since ten o'clock the night before. In the course of the morning watch, young Wilson came on deck, refreshed by his sleep, and grateful for the opportunity that Hastings' kindness had afforded him, he came up to thank him.

"What part of the country do you come from, youngster?" asked the second mate, as the boy completed his simple, but hearty acknowledgments.

"From near Somerton, Sir," answered he.

"Somerton? where away is that?" asked Hastings, "I know no such port."

"It's not a port, Sir, only a fishing village."

"Ah, yes, I do remember having heard of it now," said the other, "does not a Mr. Marsden live there?"

"Yes, Sir," said the boy, in some astonishment at the officer's local knowledge, "two of them live there, one is the parson of the parish, and his brother lives at Waterproof Lodge; my aunt was his house-keeper, till she and Miss Maria quarrelled, for she was her lady's maid besides, and there was no pleasing her in dressing her; did you know Mr. Marsden, Mr. Hastings?"

"Yes," said the other, with some confusion, "I mean, I have heard of him; so your mother is not with him now?"

"I hav'nt got no mother. Sir," answered the boy, "it's my aunt, but she's left him six years ago, she went to live with Mrs. Hastings, Sir."

"Who's Mrs. Hastings?"

"I don't know, Sir," said the boy, "it's your name too," said he, "maybe she's a relation of yours?"

"I rather think not," returned the mate, with a somewhat peculiar smile, "what was she?"

"A widow lady, Sir; if you know Somerton, you'd know the little cottage down beyond the market place, where she and Miss—"

"Call the hands to reef topsails," sung out the captain, who had been watching a suspicious looking cloud for some time, and now saw that it was approaching rapidly.

"All hands ahoy, reef topsails," sung out Hastings, as he sprang into the rigging, closely followed by the boy, who was determined on the occasion to shew his sense of the indulgence that had been granted him, by taking possession of the post of honour on the yard arm, to which his youth and inexperience but little entitled him, and in another moment, both were busily occupied reefing topsails.

In reefing, as we have already said, the yard-arms are the posts of honour; the first on the yard goes to the weather-earing, which belongs especially to the second mate, if he is seaman enough to keep it; the second goes to the lee-earing, whither, though he had no business there, for it belongs naturally to the stoutest and ablest seaman, went young Wilson, and he and the second mate were consequently separated by the whole length of the yard. The boy, however, had over-rated his own strength—the squall came on thick and fast, the sail flapped violently, and became almost unmanageable, and finally losing his hold, he was actually dropping from the yard-arm, when the man next to him, seeing what was happening, seized him by the collar, and supporting him with some little difficulty, had him passed along the yard, till he reached a place of safety. Hastings had seen all this, without venturing to leave his duty, even to help him; but when all was snug aloft, he went to look after him, with an appearance of interest that seemed hard to account for.

The boy was not hurt, he was not even frightened, for he had met the accident with a laugh, and jocularly promised the man to do the like for him; but he was what is called "shook." (familiarily "shuck,") the narrowness of his escape, for had he fallen overboard, it would have been utterly impossible to save him, had made a very serious impression upon him, and he seemed to entertain a presentiment that he never should reach England alive.

"I'd be easier in my mind, Sir," said he, "if you'd engage to deliver this little parcel to my aunt, in case I slip my wind on blue water—my father told me to bring them home to her as a keepsake; for the lady that did them, was always good to my poor mother—indeed she was good to all that ever she saw."

The objects of which he spoke, were certainly curious articles for a sailor boy to carry about on the wide ocean; they were simply four common pencil-drawings, but as the boy displayed them to his officer's eyes, a trembling shook the rough sailor's frame, for he well knew the hand that had traced them, and the initials yet further assured him that he was not mistaken in attributing them to one, the very thought of whom drove him half-distracted. He shuddered, and turned very pale.

"How did you come by these," asked he, in a deep, hollow voice, as the shock appeared to pass away; "*she* did not give them to you."

"They were my father's, Sir," answered the youth, "it was Miss Maria gave them to him, after my poor mother—"

"Who the d—l is Miss Maria?" interrupted Hastings.

"Miss Marsden, Mr. Montague's sister, Sir,—do you know her?"

"Oh, I see, his sister," said Hastings, "I understand now—yes;—this cabin smells like a saddler's shop."

"There are some hides stowed away here, Sir, ain't there?"

"Hides?" said Hastings, "no—where are you to find hides in New Zealand, unless you skinned the rats, and I don't think that would be a profitable venture—why, it would not pay for sharpening the knives."

"It was Sandy Mucklewrath, Sir, told me that there were hides," said the boy, "at least I took it for hides, though what he said sounded more like heads; but then I did not know what heads could be there for, or what sort of heads they might be. We had some pigs' heads on board, you know, but we made pea soup of them."

"I'll teach Sandy Mucklewrath to keep his own tongue in his head," growled Hastings, savagely, but still evidently in some sort of confusion, "what business has he, or you either, youngster, to talk about the cargo; so ask no questions, do you hear? and you'll be told no lies; and before you give us any more of your jabber about heads, remember there's a thing called the mast-head in a ship."

"I did not know it was any harm, Sir," said the boy, humbly, and Hastings' short-lived anger yielded at once.

"Never mind—cheer up, my lad," said he, "care killed a cat; you'll get well hand over hand, now that you've got a fine, airy state room to yourself, as if you were the skipper already. Your aunt won't know you again—you'll have become so much of a man since you parted, you'll have all the girls in Somerton running after you." Always a welcome promise this to a boy, and a smile lit up his features, which most of the girls in Somerton would have thought worth winning.

"Will you come and see us when the cargo's cleared, Sir," asked he, "we'll make out a snug berth for you in the old cottage."

"No, no," said the other, hastily, "no thank you—I mean, I shall be too busy myself for any thing of that sort."

CHAPTER XL.

THE voice of a parting soul rang on the night air of the desert, a gurgling howl burst from the lips of the detected Arab, and then died away for ever, as the life was crushed out of him, by the heavy blow with which Harry repaid his attempt upon Lord de Creci; and the disfigured body rolled over in sand and blood. The startled party sprang hastily to their arms, and their first impulse to open a fire upon their own horses, which were picketted close by, having been with some difficulty checked, they soon satisfied themselves that the unfortunate man was alone in his enterprise, and proceeded to the help of the wounded Earl. His state was alarming enough, but though the knife of the Arab had for the moment struck him senseless to the ground, the wound did not appear to be mortal—he still breathed, though painfully; and now the medical skill which Bluthenbaum had picked up in the course of his variegated career, was of the most essential service: he soon succeeded in staunching the blood, and restoring the sufferer to consciousness; and then having laid him on the ground, with a saddle for a pillow, our hero came to the perplexing question,—what to do next?

To stay where they were, was impossible—to get away, seemed equally impracticable, for he knew very well that the motion of a horse would only cause a fresh burst of blood, that would ultimately be fatal, and that of the solitary camel they still possessed, would be worse again. Fortunately, however, the camel still carried the tent-poles, and with them a sort of litter was constructed, on which they laid the patient, and relieving one another, by turns, in the carrying it, continued their dangerous and sorely-pressed march. Twice, during the early morning, they were obliged to lay their burden down upon the sand, and betake themselves to their arms to repel the desultory attacks that small parties of the Arabs, that still hovered about them, would make from time to time, in a sort of reckless desperation, as the ground slipped away behind them, and rood after rood made good, brought them nearer and nearer the territories of adjacent tribes where no further attacks could be attempted; indeed where their pursuers dared hardly venture either for peace or war. Even in these skirmishes some lives were uselessly squandered, for as each wild charge was delivered and repulsed, the dangerous character of European fire-arms in the hands of resolute men, who were moreover fighting for their lives, became more and more apparent to the assailants; the Arabs gnashed their teeth, and tore their beards, and foamed with rage, as another and another brave man went down before the deadly rifle, which, at the short distance at which it was used, rarely suffered its victims to escape; but they could not help themselves. The whole body of Moslem imprecations, bespangled and beflowered with the





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choicest elegancies of oriental eloquence, did not avail to stop a musket-ball, nor even to turn it a single hair's-breadth from its course, and a conviction of the hopelessness of their endeavours to intercept the retreat of the party, seemed at last to have almost forced itself upon their unwilling minds, when a solitary horseman rode up, in which the travellers at once recognised the man who had dismounted at the fall of the chieftain, whom O'Driscoll had so unfortunately shot, and addressed them in a short, but evidently impressive speech. They listened in silence with the most breathless attention; but their burning eyes, set teeth, and beards that absolutely curled with anger, shewed how deeply their hearts responded to his words, and as he ended, a wild roar of approbation greeted him, and then with one accord, they all dismounted, and throwing away their cloaks, assembled together manfully, about to make a desperate and determined attack on foot.

This was what, of all things, Harry most dreaded: he was well aware, that as long as the Arabs came on on horseback, coolness, steadiness, quick loading, and careful firing, would always turn their charge; but in a close, concentrated, and resolute advance on foot, the numbers of their assailants must tell; and the result would be doubtful, if not desperate; and what was worst of all, his own ammunition was running most alarmingly short, for on examining the pouches, it did not appear that there was more than two rounds for each man.

The number of the attacking party seemed to be about forty, all well armed, their dark, wild eyes gleaming with rage, their very frames seemed to quiver as the new comer once again addressed them, with a frantic energy which derived fresh fire from the evident success of his first address; already he gloated triumphantly in the blood of his victims; he wielded at will the passions of his fierce auditors, seemingly appealing to feelings that had deep root in their breasts, for every sentence was answered with a perfect yell of assent; they brandished their guns in the air, with loud and savage cries, and then forming themselves into a compact body, prepared to pounce upon their prey. As they advanced, Lord de Creci motioned Harry to approach, and as he bent over the wounded man, he took a small miniature from his breast, and gave it into his hands.

"Give this to Madelaine," said he, feebly, and speaking with much difficulty, "tell her the papers marked 'Not to be opened till after death,' which will be found in my desk at Ellesmere, will explain it all:—leave me here and save yourselves; one life will satisfy them, for it is the blood-feud that brings these people here; one life will be enough, and mine, long valueless, is now well nigh gone. Look to your own safety while there is yet time, and leave me to my fate."

"I'd see you d——d first," was all the answer that the pressure of time and circumstances allowed Captain Mowbray to make to the self-sacrificing proposition of the wounded man; and though it is with pain that we find ourselves compelled, by the irresistible force of truth, to chronicle a response, so little befitting the dignity of a hero, who ought to have addressed him for some minutes on the sanctity of friendship and the beauty of fidelity, with something about posterity—Damon and

Pythias, Pylades and Orestes, and so forth,—still we are consoled by the reflection, that, in those few and very naughty words, there certainly is embodied a sort of rough-and-ready, pea-jacketted, bull-headed, and lion-hearted heroism, that works best in the hardest weather, and plays best at the roughest game; a sort of thing that Leonidas would have welcomed to his ranks, and our own Richard would have patted on the back. However, with regard to the matter of a more suitable speech, that was a matter that settled itself, for short talking and quick hitting were most suited to the necessities of the hour. There was little time for anything, and for one of that number time was gliding into eternity; for even as the words were spoken the storm burst, a shower of balls poured in upon the party, and the master of the yacht sprung with a convulsive shriek up in the air, and then fell flat on his face, dead—he was shot through the heart.

“God rest his soul, poor boy,” said O’Driscoll, whose experience supplied him with a perfect knowledge of the catastrophe from a slight inspection of the body, “he’s gone, dished. Ye black rascals, which of yez will have this?”—and his eye roamed about as if choosing the enemy that should accompany him to the next world, “*pater noster* qui es in cœlo, hell to your souls, ye black thieves; come on and let’s see which of yez I’ll send post haste to ould Nick, to say I’m comin’? I’ve got two shots for yez yet, please God, three itself—for old Jack Tar don’t want his where he’s gone.—So you’re comin’ at last, are yez? well here goes.” Down went a man before every shot; but it did not check the advance of the infuriated Arabs, it seemed only to add fuel to the fire; the wild men cast a glance more of fury than of compassion on their comrades, as they rolled over on the sand, set their teeth, grasped their weapons yet tighter, and now, in their concentrated and deadly rage, perfectly silent, they commenced a general rush on the Europeans, who, calm and collected, with little hope, but less fear, stood by the body of their wounded chief to sell their lives as dear as was allowed them—to strike down a few more of their enemies to the earth, and then be butchered.

The last ball was in each fire-arm, the last moment seemed come to each man, they waited in momentary expectation of death; reserving their fire till their assailants should close with them, that it might at all events be effective, when suddenly, to their entire astonishment, the deliverance for which they might have looked in vain from the most deadly weapons of war, and the most unflinching courage, was effected by a creature whose very name is a synonym for fear,—by the most timid animal that runs;—just as the Arabs commenced their furious rush upon their victims, a hare, maddened by terror, and not knowing where it was going, bounded right across their path.

A hare crossing his path, is, to the Mussulman, one of the most certain omens of misfortune to the undertaking in which he is engaged. The token of failure, appearing at the very moment of triumph, awakened the dormant superstitions of their hearts. The lingering dread of European supernatural power that yet remained in their minds, though for the moment kept down by their rage, instantly resumed its sway in full force, and the next instant, utterly cowed by

its influence, and thinking of nothing but how they might get fastest out of reach of the dreaded strangers, the whole of that body had turned, and were scattering over the plain in the utmost confusion that flight and terror can produce.

To the party thus unexpectedly delivered, the reason why that dark threatening of ruin and massacre had thus melted away before their eyes like snow before the sun, was utterly unknown, and there seemed little chance of solving the mystery; the fact, however, was unquestionable, the desert was alive with the dusky fugitives; but their forms were fast vanishing behind the hillocks of sand, of which its surface was chiefly composed. Panic, having once got her inch, took an amazing number of ells, as is her custom on like occasions, and a preternatural yell, with which O'Driscoll expressed his triumph, seemed to add wings to their flight, as if a Ghoul or Afrit, or other spectral anthropophagist, were calling to them to come and be eaten.

"Ah! ah! you've got your broth, my boys, have you?" shouted he, picking up a large stone and discharging it at a group who still retained courage and fidelity enough to brave the dreaded Europeans, in a resolute attempt to carry away a wounded man; for excited as he was, he yet had sense enough not to throw away his last cartridge; "there's a two year-old for yez, and there's another; I wish they were six-pounders for your sakes,—will we hunt them, Sir?" continued he, growing more and more warmed with the instinct of pursuit, as the Arabs, who did not know what supernatural or aeronautic qualities a stone might acquire from his hands, scampered away as fast as if they had actually been six-pound shots: "Let's at them, the robbers, the thieves, the tories, we'll tear them to pieces, the scum of the earth, the spawn of Cromwell, hurrah! come on, ould Bloodybones, hurrah! no tithes, bad cess to them, Ireland for ever!—come on, Sir, we'll pepper their tails for them, by the holy Virgin, we'll——"

"Silence!" said Harry, angrily, "are you not content with such an escape as this without cramming your thick head into danger again?—see to the skipper."

"I ask your pardon, Sir," returned O'Driscoll, raising the dead man—for though all this passed in a space of time infinitely shorter than that occupied in describing it, the man was dead;—"faith, I was angered with them black blackguards, Sir, saving your presence; he's gone, Sir, poor boy—shot clane through the heart—there isn't as much life in him as would shut an oyster-shell, God rest his soul."

"Marchons," said Bluthenbaum, "we dare not rest here, Sir; they may return, time is precious, the living are more worth than the dead, and it is finished of him."

This was all very true; the man was dead, and could not be recovered; it would have been satisfactory to have buried him, but still that might possibly have involved the interment of the whole party,—the ceremony was unwillingly dispensed with, and a few moments more saw them once more in motion. No further attacks were made, and they pursued their journey unmolested and without even adventure, till at last the welcome towers of Kerek appeared to the northward; and it was with no slight joy that they rode through its rock-girt gate,

and found themselves in safety in the craggy stronghold, within whose sheltering walls they hoped to find the repose that Lord de Creci's condition required. It was high time they were at rest; the heat of the weather, the anxiety of their situation, and the irritation of travel had inflamed the wound most seriously; there was a good deal of feverishness, and Bluthenbaum became extremely uneasy, when having settled his master as comfortably as circumstances admitted of, in a room tolerably free from vermin, he examined and dressed it as well as could be done, and afterwards communicated to Harry his suspicions, that the patient was by no means going on favourably. After a little consideration upon the subject, our hero came to the conclusion that it would be best, under all the circumstances, to communicate to Lord de Creci, in whose strength of mind and personal courage he reposed the most implicit confidence, the real state of the case, and the danger in which he stood. The Earl knew that already, and the knowledge neither disturbed nor alarmed him.

"When the time is come, the tree falls," returned he calmly, but perhaps with more gentleness of manner, and a sweeter smile than customary with him, as if he felt that he was at last to have rest. "It is not much to die to him that has nothing to live for, still less to him,"—and here he looked fixedly and earnestly upon Henry, as if he wished that these words should sink deep in his heart,—"still less to him, who has always looked upon death as the beginning of life; with the life of this world I have done, for long years have I wandered bearing it about as a weary burden, but one that must not be laid aside till the time comes, and now if the time is come, I am ready to lay it down gladly and be at rest. It is strange," said he, musingly, as if he was talking to himself,—"*It is very strange, that that very evening we sailed from England, even as we were running down the Solent, I had a solemn feeling, a foreboding that this voyage was to be marked by some strange event, some great change either for good or evil, I knew not which; truly, the great change has come, and whether for good or evil I know not now,*" though here he smiled faintly; "*I hardly foresaw that it was to be so great as it has turned out to be; well, the Lord giveth, and the Lord has taken away—more from me than life, His will be done.*" He spoke no more at that time, but lay still and closed his eyes, as if he could sleep, and Harry judging that he would be best left to himself, retired, having made what arrangements circumstances admitted of, for his repose, and in a few minutes all was quiet, the only sound that broke the silence was the characteristic murmur that arose from some women grinding corn, and lightening their labour with a singularly plaintive song, or rather a subdued but still musical moaning to which the dull yet not unpleasant hum of the revolving stones formed a suitable accompaniment.

In the solitude of the little chamber, that had been allotted to his use, sat Harry Mowbray, and looked steadily into his own heart, and there he found that which he little expected. The excitement of battle and travel was over, his companion lay on the bed whence he never expected to see him arise, he was far away from his country, his home, from her he loved, and who he knew loved him; he felt himself essen-

tially alone,—alone and helpless,—he felt more than he had ever felt before, how dependant in such an hour man is upon a superior power,—how that power in its might and mercy is to be sought, and where it is to be found,—that which the troubles of war and love, the dangers and the distress to which he had himself all his life been exposed had failed to effect, was brought to pass by the affection he bore for the wounded Earl, who had acquired beyond all human beings that he had ever met his esteem and his love;—he felt his spirit softened,—his heart, long proud and unyielding, now bending and melting,—a new life struggling in his breast, not painfully, but gently and winningly, and kneeling down by the rude bedstead, he prayed long and earnestly the wounded man might yet be spared.

No man ever yet prayed with his whole soul, and his whole heart, and prayed altogether in vain, we know not always what we ask, nor what will be given;—that prayer had a higher mission than it pretended to, it was not the healing of wounded flesh, or the soothing of feverish unrest, that was involved in that prayer; unknown to him who prayed it bore upon its lowly accents the health of an immortal soul, and he rose from his knees an altered man, no longer stiff-necked in his unbelief, or indifferent in his scepticism, for the prayer that he put up for another had a power that he knew not of, to guide himself; he knelt down in the darkness of doubt, he rose in the light of belief.

Undoubtedly the scenes he had trodden since his arrival in the Holy Land, had tended much to this, they had appealed too forcibly to his reason not to make a deep impression on his mind, he could not deny that the judgments denounced had been executed, with a terrible exactness; it was as clear as the sun at noon-day that that which had been promised, and that which had been threatened thousands of years ago, had been fulfilled to the letter, but bare human reason will no more supply faith than a mere dry faggot will supply flame, the faggot lies withered, formless, cold, and useless, till the fire is applied to turn it to light, and warmth, and cheer; and as profitless is bare reason even amounting to conviction, till the torch of devotion bids it do its office of joyfulness. That was now done, though we will not deny that in the feelings that at this moment agitated our hero's bosom, others more belonging to the world mingled. Our readers are already aware of the peculiar pride of character to which Clara alluded, when she made use of the expression, "Nothing would be more difficult to you than to express any opinions that you did not really entertain, you could not do so for one day, no not one single hour;" on the occasion of their parting in the churchyard at Ellesmere. This remark of hers was strictly true. Even the fervency of his love for her would not have induced Harry to make a profession of faith in which he did not fully and firmly believe, and certainly that night as he lay down to rest, he was cheered by visions of her that he had long and truly loved, now at last—as he fondly hoped—won.

A strong constitution unweakened by former excesses, a placid mind fearless and untroubled, that added nothing of mental anguish to bodily injury, a sound night's rest undisturbed within or without, are potent restoratives to a wounded man; the morning saw Lord de Creci better

than his most sanguine well-wishers could have ventured to expect ; the fever had left him and he was in a fair way of recovery ; and the very first thing that he did was to ask for the picture he had entrusted to Harry at the time that he imagined himself about to be sacrificed to the anger of the Arabs. ' Poor fellow, I wonder did any one ever refuse him,' was Harry's reflection, as he restored the picture ; when Lord de Creci received it he eagerly opened it, as if to assure himself that the portrait still remained in the locket, and as he gazed earnestly upon it, Harry caught a glimpse of it, that for a moment caused him to stare at the Earl, with an expression of unmitigated astonishment. He had however no time to ask questions, for almost immediately afterwards, Lord de Creci, as if his thoughts had been turned into a more serious channel by the actual presence of death, addressed him in a tone he had as yet but rarely adopted ; and during that morning his conversation with our hero was of a grave and more important character than it had hitherto been.

It is not in such pages as these, that a suitable place can be found for describing the various stages through which Henry Mowbray arrived at a final firm and unshaken conviction of the truth of revelation, or to detail the arguments by which Lord de Creci, who gained strength from day to day, assisted in bringing about that great and desirable change, — arguments such as the strong but not presumptuous mind of the Earl, trained and equipped by long and careful study, furnished readily, strikingly and effectively, each complete in itself, yet in harmony with others, each binding and strengthening those that went before it into a solid foundation for those that were to come after, all resting on the rock of truth. Suffice it to say, that long before Lord de Creci's convalescence had advanced far enough to enable him to leave Kerek, a home returning traveller undertook the charge of a letter to Clara Hastings, in which the solemn assurance that her objection to their union was removed now and for ever, was followed up by the claim of the fulfilment of the promise she had made when they had parted in the churchyard at Ellesmere, and a somewhat characteristic expression of impatience at the delay which in consequence of the impossibility of either moving or leaving his noble companion, must take place sore against his will, before he could reach England, and in person call on her to redeem her pledge. He hardly thought when he wrote these words that they were only destined to embitter misery.

In spite of his impatience, these were golden days for our hero, much well applied time did he spend in conversations with Lord de Creci, equally beneficial to both parties, but incalculably serviceable to him. The giving orders for their domestic arrangements devolved upon him ; a stroll through the half ruined town occupied an hour or two in the cool of the evening ; sometimes Lord de Creci would come out as he regained strength, and wander amongst the mixed memorials of the Moabite and the Israelite, the Roman and the Arab, the Saracen and the Crusader, the Mahometan Turk and the Greek Christian, with which its rocky wilderness of ruined edifices abounded, and when Lord de Creci did not walk with him, he had a sort of shadowy companion that he could conjure up at will, and generally willed to conjure up

enever he was alone, — a vision with glistening hair and beaming eyes, and a kindly smile, and a friendly welcome, and something almost better than all these things, and so time passed away with that singular simplicity with which the old gentleman plies his pinions, when there is nothing to distinguish one flap of his wings from another, when life is so enough occupied not to be burdensome, and just uneventful enough to present marked points that serve as dates, pegs whereupon to hang epochs.

However, often as the sword and the spear had passed over the walls of Kerek, yet one more conqueror was expected ; there were rumours of war that in a few weeks were to turn into realities ; every day Lord de Creci's anticipations of the country being on the point of becoming the scene of a civil war, were more and more confirmed ; every day brought accounts more and more alarming of the thunder-cloud that was gathering in Egypt, and all the party were highly pleased when Lord de Creci's convalescence enabled them to move again, and leave the doomed land before the storm burst. The land journey was made successfully, indeed the occupation and change of air seemed to be of service to Lord de Creci, — he was himself again when he stood once more on the deck of his own ship, and seemed to derive much satisfaction from the idea of a cruise among the Greek islands, and a visit to Constantinople. They had not embarked an hour too soon, the coast of Syria had hardly melted away behind him, before a frigate under Turkish colours appeared on the larboard bow, steering N. E. by E.

"She's not for Constantinople," remarked the Earl, "she's for the Red Sea, the Egyptians are going to commence hostilities at last." He was not in conjecturing that the frigate meant mischief, though he was not fully aware of the extent of her importance ; he was not aware that the Pasha was on board, and that though he was lying on his cushions on the cabin floor exceedingly drunk, Suleyman Bey was sitting orders at the cabin table, perfectly sober, and trusting most devoutly that there was to be no Sir Sydney Smith to mix in the game at this time. The moment the frigate caught sight of the schooner, she gave up a signal which was of course unintelligible to the stranger, fired a gun which the Arab partly understood, and altered her course to approach her which the yacht understood perfectly, and thought under the circumstances, the chances of quarantine and all considered, that the best thing she could do was to set studding-sails. The frigate, however, instantly crowded every stitch of canvass she could venture to use, and as she was still a long way to the westward, it was clear that she must cut off the schooner unless the latter altered her course, indeed after a short trial of speed, it became apparent that the ship of war had the heels of the yacht, a fact made more intelligible by a few rounds shot from her bow chasers, that came skipping along the water a great deal too close to be pleasant.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE Albatross was rapidly nearing the shores of England, when one morning, the wind had so completely died away, that the crew could almost see the fishes that swarmed about the vessel ; so calm and still was the sea, over which the stately ship glided at the rate of about four knots an hour ; her wings outspread as if to complete the likeness to the ocean bird, from which she took her name. Courses, topsails, top-gallant sails, royals, were all standing, and all new, for a ship, unlike a human traveller, puts on her best suit to encounter the roughest weather, and so much of the old canvass had been considered unfit to meet the rough weather they had to expect coming round the Horn, that as soon as they approached that dangerous and stormy cape, a new suit had been bent, her rigging had been thoroughly overhauled and repaired, and since passing it, a few touches of the paint brush in such places as were practicable, had removed much of the marks of hardships and rough weather from her hull, and as she glided majestically over the unruffled waves, with that easy stateliness of motion that belongs hardly to any moving thing but a ship under sail, few would have thought of the years of storm and trouble, of battle with the wild elements and commerce, with the yet wilder inhabitants of the southern zone, that she had passed since she left the shores of England, and fewer still would have dreamed of the tragedy that was about to be acted on board, or thought that in the midst of the pride and the loveliness, the speed and the strength, the doubts and the hopes of the homeward bound vessel, her days, her very hours were numbered.

It was true, that a few days before a leak had been discovered to exist, though no one could make out exactly where it was, or what it arose from, or cared about it, a couple of hands an hour at the pump every day kept it well under, it was found not to gain upon them, and once that was ascertained, all farther anxiety about it ceased. The master of the vessel, gladdened at the prospect of a speedy return to his family, had just come on deck in high good humour, he cast a glance aloft, then looked to windward, and thence to the yard arms, as if he were considering whether the old barkey would not carry studding-sails, when some of the crew, seeing him well pleased with himself, and likely to be pleased with anything else, judged the opportunity favourable for asking leave to fish, a request which was granted, and in a few minutes the lines were over the side, and a species of dolphin, that caught eagerly at almost any bait, was taken in great abundance. Whilst the crew was busy at this, the master called Hastings to him, and observing that he had for the last two days remarked a disagreeable smell in the after part of the ship, as if some

animal substance were corrupting, desired him to come below with him, and help him to overhaul the consignment of New Zealanders' heads, which articles of infernal traffic were deposited in a sort of cabin separated roughly from the hold, which had been bulkheaded off for the purpose of serving as a sale room, which in fact was the temporary sleeping place that had been assigned to young Wilson. They had been carefully packed in four cases, which, for the present, served for the boy's bed, and upon removing them, it instantly became evident from which of them the odour proceeded, and it was not very long before they came to one that evidently had not been properly smoked, and was, in fact, almost in a state of putrefaction already, and from which proceeded the peculiar animal odour, something like tanned leather, that Hastings had already observed.

"That is it," said the captain, throwing it upon the floor, "we must pitch it overboard,"—and having ascertained that none of the others were tainted, he fastened up the case again, and proceeded to wrap up the head in a piece of paper; for rough as he was, he did not like openly throwing it overboard in the presence of the crew.

"It's no great loss, for it would not have sold, it is not tattooed; it never should have been taken in at all."

"I didn't take in that last batch," returned Hastings, who was occupied in replacing the case they had opened, "it was the first mate."

"I'm almost sure," continued the captain, "that I have seen this head alive; though I do not recollect whose shoulders it stood on."

Hastings looked at the features of the dead, and a deep groan escaped him, for he recognised the features of Lester.

The dead seemed to cling to him, and the horror of the discovery prevented the murderer joining the crew at their dinner, notwithstanding the temptation, so potent after a long course of salt meat, of the savoury odour that arose from the broiled dolphin, upon which his messmates were regaling themselves; he sat apart in sullen silence, and tried to nibble a biscuit, which one of the crew, with whom his stout-hearted fearlessness and reckless good nature made him popular, had brought him, upon seeing that one of those dark moods, with which they were already familiar, had come upon him. Even this he could not eat, it lay neglected by his side, the crew finished their dinner and threw the remains overboard, and then, laughing at the eagerness with which the fish swallowed the pieces of their own species, and comparing it with the cannibal habits of the wild islanders, whom they had left some months before, repaired to their several employments, for no man is ever allowed to be idle on board a merchant-ship; the sail-maker was laying out a new fore-topsail on the quarter deck, the carpenter had established himself at his bench in the waist, some of the crew were picking oakum, some mending their own clothes, conversing occasionally with one another in a low tone, and occasionally stealing a glance at Hastings, who was the only officer on deck, to see whether he would take any notice of it, (for talking at their work is against their rules) and ceasing in their conversation whenever his eye wandered towards any one of the groups. Whether they spoke, or whether they were silent, they were a happy assemblage; that crew

of the Albatross ; the excitement of the rapid approach towards home, enlivened them all ; with steady winds and a fast ship, they were making little less than two hundred knots in the twenty-four hours, and even the calm in which they now found themselves, though it impeded their progress for the time, was likely to be only temporary, and left them for the moment in a sort of comparative idleness, or at least cessation from active work aloft, that gave them time to think of home, and all its delights. The progress of the vessel to the northward, though not distinctly marked in the day time, was legible in characters that could not be mistaken in the heavens at night ; for each evening, they found that in the rapid change of latitude, they had sunk some constellation in the south, and raised another in the northern horizon, and they all felt that the sort of rough happiness that belongs to a sailor was theirs, a clear sea, a home voyage, and as much wind as heart could desire. The captain and first mate had now dined and came on deck, all tongues were stilled, and all hands busy ; the captain looked up aloft, and seemed once more to deliberate the studdingsail question, but the wind had increased whilst he was below at his dinner. Every sail was drawing fully, and being somewhat short-handed, he did not think it expedient to shew more canvass than he could readily take in ; she was now making six knots an hour, he judged that there was sail enough set, and turning to the man at the helm, he directed him to steer a point or two more to the eastward.

The man answered the order with a vacant stare, but neither repeated it, nor obeyed it ; the captain, angry at his apparent neglect of duty, repeated it with a short gruff voice, but the other did not seem to understand it, and after staring at his commander for a moment, with an expression not unlike that of an idiot, reeled forward, and then rolled over on the deck, and at the same moment, another of the crew who had gone down into the fore-castle to fetch something, and had just come up again, sat down upon the deck so ill, that he could not stir or speak. The two were hurried below directly, but one of the men who helped them to their berths, lay down directly in his own, and returned no more. The captain had called another man to the helm, and paced moodily up and down the deck, wondering what this strange visitation might be ; an intense anxiety was depicted in his countenance, when he thought for a moment he had discovered the true cause ; he knew very well that the cholera, the great scourge of *that* time, had commenced its progress towards the west, and though he could not be aware that in that very November it actually reached the shores of England, still he did not know how far west it might have penetrated, and he knew one peculiarity of that disorder, the singular quality it has of stretching out a sort of streak of miasma, hundreds of miles to sea, and the suspicion that his ship had entered one of these pestiferous winds, and that his crew might be so reduced by the disease as to be incapable of working the vessel, at once occurred to him. His worst fears seemed likely to be realised, for soon after the whole crew complained of vertigo and sickness ; and at this moment his eye lighted on one of the dolphins that yet lay on the deck,—he started, turned deadly pale, and holding on by the mizen rigging, glared upon





it for a few moments with a look of horror, for now for the first time the terrible truth burst upon his mind,—the fish was poisonous.

Every man on board, with the sole exception of Hastings, had partaken heartily of this deadly repast, all the sailors were now rapidly exhibiting symptoms of its fatal effects, and the chief mate, who had gone below to see if the three men who were lying in their berths in the fore-castle, were getting better, returned, and with a wild look of affright reported in a low, husky voice to the captain that two of them were dead in their berths. By five o'clock, the captain, chief-mate and Hastings were the only people on board who were capable of assisting in the working of the ship, which already began to shew symptoms of having too much sail set, to take in one stitch of which was utterly impossible; and the two former only escaped the fate of the crew for in a short time, the men having dined about an hour before them had been attacked first, but in due time the party in the cabin shared the disaster, and before the sun went down one solitary man kept his feet on the deck of the Albatross. He had gone below just before sunset, to see if any symptoms of recovery manifested themselves in young Wilson, who had been one of the first attacked, but there was but little hope for him, the pale sunken countenance, the lips already colourless, the voice dwindled down to a mere whisper, whose words were not always coherent, all announced that life was fast waning there, and however the fate of his shipmates and the danger to which he himself was exposed of perishing alone in the unmanageable ship might appal him, he certainly at the moment thought more of the boy's death than of any other object that scene of desolation presented.

"You'll be sure to remember my aunt at Somerton," said Wilson, in a feeble tone, "you'll bring her the drawings and this book too; don't forget to tell her I was reading it the last thing,—no,—don't take it *yet*,"—for Hastings was involuntarily taking the Bible out of his hand.

"I'll not forget," answered he, "if I ever reach the shore myself, for I don't clearly see how one man is to handle six hundred tons."

"Take care the drawings don't get wet," murmured the boy, whose senses were evidently wandering, "and bring home my Sunday clothes to my mother—catechism every Sunday—before church,—my duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself:"—Hastings started, looked uneasily at the dying lad whose mind was now evidently in a scene, that he, sinner that he was, trembled to look back to;—"and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me,—as I would they should do unto me,—to love, honour and succour my father and mother, my father and mother,—thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,—I loved them, but they are gone before me;—thou shalt do no murder—I never did,"—Hastings groaned deeply,—"Thou shalt not commit adultery—no—" Hastings rose to leave the poor boy to die alone, the contrast was too hideous,—but the child had numbered his days and his hours, his very minutes were counted, and dwindled to moments,—the conscience-stricken sinner had hardly reached the door of the little cabin, before a gurgling gasp attracted his notice and rivetted him to the spot,—ano-

ther yet more convulsive followed, he turned irresolutely, and returned once more to the pile of boxes that served the poor orphan for a death-bed, another inarticulate sound that yet spoke plainer than words could speak, laboured painfully upwards from his sinking chest,—a light feeble rattling,—a cold clammy sweat on his skin,—a shiver passed over his youthful limbs, and the boy slept the sleep that breaks but with the trumpet of doom.

The mate stood for a short time, his eye fixed on the inanimate form before him, and then, as if the conviction that the boy was really dead, dissolved the spell that held him, he took the little parcel that he had committed to his charge, and was just placing it in the pocket of his pilot-jacket, when a thought seemed to cross him, he took it out again, opened it and selecting one of the drawings, kissed it repeatedly, and then muttering, "They'll never miss it, and if they do, I can say I never had it; they would not grudge it if they knew its value to me,"—laid it aside, and hastily wrapping up the parcel again, left the two in his own cabin and went upon deck.

The chief mate was still at the wheel, his strength seemed as yet unimpaired, but he was steering wild; the captain had sat down by the companion, muttering to himself; some of the sailors were holding on by the shrouds, but were swaying backwards and forwards like drunken men, and all was as desolate and hopeless as well could be imagined.

"Try and rouse the skipper," said the chief mate; "I've heard that in these poisoning cases, if you can keep people awake there is still hope,"—and Hastings shook the captain roughly.

"Keep your bloody hands to yourself," muttered the unconscious sufferer,—and the phrase, though one of common use enough at sea, and indeed as an ordinary slang phrase on shore, was invested with a grim significance by the murderer's conscience.

"I'm getting rather queer in the daylight myself," said the mate; "go below Hastings, like a good fellow, and see if there's any one there fit to take a spell at the helm." Hastings descended, not very sanguine indeed, but still hardly able to persuade himself that that crew was actually doomed, and that he would soon be alone of them all on the wide ocean, the only living creature on board; but alas, it was even so, there was no hope, he only found himself among the dying and the dead; some were already gone to their long home, the rest were one after the other falling off into a sort of stupor that soon terminated in death; and suddenly observing from the rushing of the water by the ship's bows that there was a considerable increase in her progress, he returned hastily to the deck, where he found the chief mate, whose iron constitution had hitherto withstood the power of that fatal repast, and who had as yet stood stoutly at the helm, beginning to yield to the irresistible influence of the poison, and at last declaring that he was so dizzy that he could neither see to steer nor make out the compass, he lashed the helm to keep her head before the wind, and let her go wherever she pleased,—and exclaiming that he might as well die in his berth as on deck, went below. The captain was lying dead by the companion, and Hastings alone remained unimpaired in strength and retaining his senses.

CHAPTER XLII.

To Sir Thomas Horton's mercy or other Christian quality, Lady Sarah in her need might have appealed in vain, had she possessed the power of appealing at all. Hope had well nigh left her, for, a mere child in his grasp, she had struggled in vain to free herself; she could not give utterance to a single cry, so tightly did he keep his hand over her mouth; the rope was actually round her neck, and the world seemed fading away from her, when suddenly the lunatic's mythology came to her help, his grasp relaxed, a dissatisfied expression replaced the grin of fiendish triumph that so lately glared upon his countenance, and it seemed as if he missed something.

"This will never do, my dear Psyche," said he, "Cupid ought to have been here,—where can he be all this time?"

"Yes, where can Cupid be?—go and look for him," gasped Lady Sarah, staggering nearly dead to a sofa, too terrified and exhausted to scream, but retaining a characteristic quickness and presence of mind sufficient to enable her to see and avail herself of the wayward fantasy of the madman,—“bring him here, he's in the conservatory.”

"Among the roses," said Sir Thomas solemnly, as he left the room.

For nearly a minute, Lady Sarah could not stir from the sofa on which she had thrown herself; she could hardly draw breath, the pressure of the murderer's fingers was not yet removed from her throat, the terror of the moment still quelled her heart, she lay panting and sobbing without thought of saving herself by flight, when, to her infinite horror, she heard him returning. He was silent, and, as it appeared, alone, but she knew his heavy footstep, she made an effort to rise, but her strength failed her, she strove to cry, but her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth, her voice refused its office,—the madman stood for a moment, an awful moment, in the half-opened door, and then, with a profound gravity, that under any other circumstances would have been infinitely ludicrous, ushered in the Cupid of his disordered imagination, in the person of Lord Chorley.

"Here's Cupid, now for it," said he; and not even the really horrible character of the whole scene, could now repress Lady Sarah's risible inclinations. The young nobleman, whom the maniac had encountered instantly after he had left the room, looked with a puzzled stare from one to the other, seeking explanation, without much reasonable prospect of finding any,—the whole thing was too absurd, and her Ladyship burst into a laugh. But the occasion was not one to admit of long continued merriment, a wolfish glance from Sir Thomas reminded her that 'those laugh best that laugh last;' there was still much to be done before safety could be reckoned upon, and the fear of his violence returned to her at once.

"Oh save me, save me from that horrible man, Lord Chorley," cried she, "he's out of his senses,—he's been trying to murder me."

A change flashed over Lord Chorley's usually unruffled countenance the half comic, half bewildered expression of good-humoured worry gave place in an instant to a savage frown, for he saw as it were instinctively what was the real state of matters; the chord was touched the response was instant, and forth at once came the gladiator to slumbers in most men's breasts, and wakes in none so savagely as that in whom it wakes not readily; he neither spoke, nor considered, he hesitated, but instantly and fiercely grappled with his formidable antagonist. Strange to say, he encountered no resistance whatever.

It might have been the well-known influence of resolution upon lunatics (and a good many more) that quelled the perturbed spirit; what is more probable that the character of Sir Thomas' delusion, was such, that whilst it irresistibly impelled him to take life as long as it could be committed quietly, and as it were naturally, in some singular connection with his wandering fancies, it by no means prepared him for the unintelligible and unwelcome annoyance of a personal contest: a maniac, like a wild beast, rarely, if he can possibly hurt it, faces his victim; whichever was the cause, Sir Thomas seen absolutely cowed, he appeared hardly to resent the rough grasp of the excited young nobleman, did not as much as speak, suffered himself to be secured without opposition, and that very evening was lodged with further trouble within the walls of a lunatic asylum. Unhappily the walls, as we shall hereafter see, performed but ill their office of straining his hideous impulse; but we have supped full of horn 'Revenons a nos moutons,' meaning thereby the Lord Chorley and Lady Sarah Fitzwarine.

The bustle of securing the patient had subsided, the two or three servants who had been concerned in it, had left the music-room, the two remained by themselves; Lady Sarah, as is commonly the case, was now even more agitated than when her life was actually in danger there is something in present peril that braces the nerves, one has time to think of fear, when one is busy with danger; but the tension speedily relaxes when the peril is passed, and she sat white, panting and starting every moment with the nervous apprehension of his return Lord Chorley, who was somewhat flushed by his exertion, and better known also, by his success, thought she never had looked so attractive as at that particular moment, the more so as there seemed little immediate danger of her either scolding or laughing at him then; with the opinion of his, acting as it were magnetically, led him to seat him upon the sofa beside her, and, finding one of her hands lying listless upon the aforesaid sofa, as if it really hardly belonged to her, to appropriate that hand for the time being to himself as a sort of waif or straggling flotsam or jetsam, in which he enjoyed some manorial right of asportation.

"I owe my life to you, Lord Chorley," said she, with more softness than she was accustomed to exhibit. There was an indescribable sweetness in her manner of saying these few words that conveyed more than any set form of speech she *could* have used, there might have been a gentle pressure of the hand that still held hers as a precious thing, as if to indicate that she knew the amount of her debt, and



1881

meant to pay it like an honest woman, a half averted glance, a half perceptible trembling all seemed to betoken the moment to have arrived when by the laws that govern such mirrors of nature as this history, his Lordship *ought* to have laid his coronet at the feet of the lady,—he did not do so, for a reason he had.

The reason why the Lord Chorley did not then and there lay his coronet at the feet of the Lady Sarah Fitzwarine, was, that he had not it with him; a circumstance, which probably caused him at the moment to forget entirely that he was a peer of parliament, a pillar of the state, a right trusty and entirely well beloved counsellor of his most gracious Majesty, a patron of three livings, a colonel of militia, high steward of Billingsgate, recorder of St. Giles, a major of yeomanry, a deputy-lieutenant, a (see advertisement) director of two or three joint-stock banks, half a dozen life insurance companies, a cemetery in a gravel-pit, some South American mines, not *in nubibus* but above the clouds, in the Andes, a masonic grand master, or any other dignitary whatever, and what was more which induced him to think and proceed as if he were nothing else but what he was, viz. a young man in love, which is a respectable character enough for a young man to appear in, once or twice in his life, not much oftener. Accordingly, instead of the emblematical proceeding of transferring his coronet from his head to her feet, he compounded the matter, and as it were split the difference, by the lover-like but unlordly measure of encircling her waist with his arm, somewhat timidly, it is true, but as yet without reproach.

"Lady Sarah," said he, in a low tone, and then suddenly started,—not at the sound himself had made, but at the sound of a huge bell that clattered out most importunately to announce that luncheon was ready,—as if they cared a farthing about luncheon. The start drew her a little closer to him, still unreprieved,—bells are ticklish things upon such occasions, they have associations,—the brazen clamour continued, it sounded in his ears like Bacon's brazen head, growling *TIME IS*,—he acquired courage from the clatter, as troops are animated by the sound of drums,—he felt that if he let this opportunity slip, no such other would ever offer, time seemed passing, it was a race between Love and luncheon, the pace terrific, the prize in view,—still that confounded bell kept on its endless clatter, clatter, clatter.—beware Love, lest it thunder, *TIME WAS*; Love took the lead,—and he had the audacity to steal a kiss from her pouting lips.

"I cannot help this," half panted, half murmured Lady Sarah, "but you know, Lord Chorley, that this is not right."

"Let us *make it right*," was all the answer his Lordship's oratorical skill furnished him with at the moment,—but it was enough; indeed by a sort of double action it served both for question and answer; Love won the race, in a canter, and passed the winning post in laughing triumph; very many words more did not pass between the two, and though it is a fact that a private interview immediately succeeding, delayed Lord and Lady Ellesmere from their luncheon, till the potatoes were cold, it is not recorded that they complained of the potatoes.

Most of our readers are acquainted with the peculiar sort of dis-

occupants to Paris, Italy, and all sorts of places worth seeing in no time worth mentioning; it seemed as if Fortunatus' wishing cap were whisking from room to room stark staring mad;—there was glitter of diamonds, and gleaming of rubies; there were visions of white wreaths, and phantasms of white satins, shadows flung in advance of a singular substance, an unctuous conglomerate of suet, orange peel, the pips of raisins, and a spoonful or two of flour, plastered over with a white sweetish cement, flavoured with prussic acid, which some unaccountable eccentricity of language, has associated with the goddess of the hour, under the name of bridecake, a mystical compound whose indigestibility is so intense, that the very placing a minute particle of it under the pillow, is said to produce dreams of the most tremendous character; this substantial food of wedlock (love is a lighter feeder), though itself distant by the regulation two months that seem by law established in this country to intervene between the first 'yes' and the second, the two affirmatives that do not make a negative, already made its influence felt, and lay heavy in imagination on the breasts of many. However, if it murdered sleep, it gave birth to dreams; with some its attendant ceremony personified itself in an individual, others viewed it collectively, but all was not hope and cheer in that house:—we have seen that there was one, who, whilst she could rejoice in a sister's happiness, had yet a secret sorrow of her own. Nor was Lady Madelaine the only person to whom the events of that day brought gloomy recollections.

Nearly forty years before, the Marquis of Ellesmere had a brother, young, gay, thoughtless, and dissipated, who at the age of eighteen, thought fit to fall in love with a young lady, about his own age, a member of a family of distinction little below the rank of royalty. The passion was reciprocated, but the parents considered the parties too young for marriage, and agreed in insisting that the affair should be broken off. Restrictions on one side led to evasions in the other; forbidden to speak to one another in public, the young people adopted the fatal measure of meeting in private, and the unhappy consequences were not long in developing themselves, for it soon became apparent that Lady Susan — was about to become a mother before she was a wife. It is useless to recall the memory of the sad scene that followed this discovery,—of the recriminations between the families that prevented the only reparation that Lord Thomas could have made,—of the hurrying the poor girl away to France, then in the fiercest turmoil of the revolution—of the last scene between the injured father and the guilty lover,—the terrible oath that the infuriated nobleman swore, that sooner than see his daughter wedded to her betrayer, he would see her in her grave,—of the anxious delay of the next morning, when the young Lord Thomas appeared not at his usual hour—the lagging minutes that passed—the boding looks that were interchanged among the assembled party,—the gloomy apprehensions that arose when the servant who had been sent to summon him, returned with the intelligence that his bedchamber was locked, and no answer was returned to his calls,—the forcing of the door, and the first sad token that met his father's eye, slight but certain, the empty phial lying on the floor,—the solemn inquest mercifully tempering the hideous law of that day

—the tomb that brings a cold shudder to those that pass by it, or the gloomy lot of her who still dragged on the weary chain of a poisoned existence,—the birth of a child of sin in the midst of the maddening horrors of the French Revolution, a child so born, so nurtured, that it seemed almost impossible that he should pass quietly through an untroubled life to a peaceful end,—nor did he, for that child was the wayward creature whom we have just seen consigned to the walls of a madhouse. Truly the sins of his parents were visited upon Sir Thomas Horton.

The knowledge of this was confined to few individuals, amongst whom was Mr. Marsden, through whose agency a yearly allowance from Lord Ellesmere had been paid to Sir Thomas; and his Lordship now assumed the duty of making all arrangements for the security of the person of the maniac. In the confusion and preoccupation incidental to these scenes, Lady Ellesmere found little time to think more of Clara; an attempt made a day or two afterwards, by Lady Madelaine, to induce her to reconsider her determination, was met by a simple but very conclusive answer,—viz. a prohibition of the subject for the future: and though neither of the young ladies hesitated to declare their belief that Clara was hardly used, they had no power to shake their mother's determination; and in a few days more, when the poor girl's health was sufficiently restored, she and her mother departed from Ellesmere.

But the Somerton of this time was not the Somerton of the past; every familiar object became reproachful in their eyes; a constant weight seemed to press upon them; the story of Clara's dismissal from her situation at Ellesmere, had reached Somerton before them; magnified of course by the hundred tongues of rumours, and more especially enlarged and illustrated by the one tongue of Miss Maria Marsden, who never forgave Mrs. Hastings having, however involuntarily, endangered her supremacy in the bachelor establishment of her brother; and who, moreover, thought fit to affect a very considerable amount of sentiment, touching Sir Thomas's madness, and to insinuate that Clara or her mother had some hand in producing it, which she could never pardon them, for a reason of her own which should go down to her grave with her,—but no man should ever call her wife, she never could be the bride of another, (which seemed not unlikely) and divers mysterious formulæ of the sort. Mr. Marsden himself, upon his return to Waterproof Lodge, most undoubtedly intended to be as benevolent as he could, and endeavoured to console Mrs. Hastings, but the best intentions cannot always be carried out in matters of consolation, and his attempts were utterly unbearable; the usual amount of petty spite, ill concealed triumph, and malignant insinuations, were at work to annoy them, and they soon resolved to depart for ever from Somerton. Little more than a week after this determination had been come to, arrived Harry's letter from Syria. Clara shed tears of joy when she read of the great and inestimable change that had taken place in his religious views, but she shed not those tears for joy for herself, for her mind was already made up.

"The wife of Harry *must* be above reproach, above suspicion," said she, "I will not be the cause of his existence being constantly embittered, by his being compelled to share the disgrace, unjust,

unearned, it is true, but still in the eyes of the world, disgrace, that clings to me," and in accordance with this resolution, she wrote to him, entreating him to forget her, assuring him that before the letter could reach him, she would be out of reach of his search, detailing the cause of the course she felt herself bound to adopt, and finally, bidding him an eternal adieu.

Having left this letter at Falconscrag, to await his arrival, whenever that might take place, they continued their preparations for quitting England; where to go was the next difficulty, Germany, France, Italy, were by turns discussed, and finally they determined upon a petty town in the South of France, which they were to reach by a vessel then loading at Southampton for Bordeaux, a sailing vessel, for their means were so limited, that the small sum saved by not incurring the additional expense of steam conveyance, was an object to them, and even the trifling sum of money that they had, had been increased beyond its probable amount, from a source from which Mrs. Hastings certainly expected little; for at an auction, by which they disposed of most of their furniture three days before their intended departure, Mr. Montague Marsden had chosen to bid for every thing that was put up, until he became the possessor of the whole, including a harp, pianoforte, and wardrobe, at prices considerably exceeding what they would have brought, had he not thought fit to be, after his own fashion, chivalrous. It was a sort of chivalry certainly.

Perhaps there was something over-charged in this resolution of Clara's. Harry was certainly entitled to some voice in the matter of whether the unhappy misunderstanding of which she was the victim did unfit her for being his wife, and she did him injustice in supposing him capable of the worldliness she attributed to him; but she reasoned as many women reason, that man has so many shields against love, in ambition, pleasure, occupation, fame, even avarice, that a disappointment in love sits light upon him, as it often *seems* to do. She thought not of the high heart that must not bend till it break, of the blasted and withered spirit that must suffer but may not complain, and that man bears unpitied if not despised. She dreamed how often the vigil of the student, the sword of the soldier, the deep plans of the statesman, the smile of the gay, the voice of the bard, the toil by day and the dream by night, nay even the wary calculations of the merchant, look only to success as the stepping-stone to the love of woman, and she imagined that she was heroically sacrificing herself to the future happiness of his life, whilst in reality she was taking from him all that made life worth having in his eyes, because she did not know the heart of man. So passed the days bitterly, till that one arrived that was to be their last on English ground.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE setting sun, arrayed in purple and gold, disappeared in all the gorgeous splendour of the ocean twilight, and it seemed as if the last faint gleams of hope were deserting the Albatross with its light ; as the evening closed, the wind began to rise, and the ship made rapid way before it, the night set in rough and dreary, the black jagged clouds hurried wildly by upon the howling blast, shewing at intervals the bright cold stars, that seemed, to the conscience-stricken imagination of the murderer, to look with a calm and passionless cruelty upon the living death which was his awful lot, the sea ran higher and higher every minute, and the incessant complaining of the masts shewed that they were carrying more canvas than they could well stand. About eight bells he bethought himself of going below to see if perchance the mate, who had kept off the poison longer than any of the others, might yet live, but just as he reached the companion, he was met by a figure in white which rushed hastily past him with a frightful howl, reached the side by a frantic bound and instantly precipitated itself into the ocean. The captain was dead and cold, the mate's cabin was empty, and on going forward with a lantern to ascertain the state of the others, the terrible fact forced itself on his mind, that the last survivor of that ill-fated crew had passed through madness to eternity, and that he alone remained alive in the unpeopled ship.

He sat down by the companion, with a laugh that seemed to have something of insanity in it, and looked aloft. It was an uncheering prospect, the huge cloud of canvass that met his view, was a mighty power either for good or evil,—it might waft him to some friendly shore, but it might in a moment overwhelm him in the waves ; to reduce one single stitch was out of his power, and there before his eyes rose the sails, all bellying out with the breeze that was still freshening, all seeming to mock the anxious glance he bent upon them ; the masts creaked and swayed, the rigging seemed sometimes strained, till it looked as if it were parting ; but the spars were stout, the cordage new, the sails fresh bent, every thing held, the rudder had been judiciously lashed, it was not worth his while to exhaust his strength in attempting to steer her, and the solitary man sat patiently by the helm in the stupefaction of hopelessness ; the dark shroud in which despair envelopes guilt.

The night passed away, the light in the east increased and brightened, and spread over the heavens, and a new day began ; but the rising sun shone upon no token of help to the death-stricken ship. Hastings' eye eagerly swept the horizon, but no sail broke the uniformity of its vast circle ; and still he sat, motionless, voiceless, hopeless, prayerless ; dark thoughts of other days crowded upon his mind, some-

times the terrible forest in New Zealand, with its guilty tragedy, would start up in imagination before his eyes, among the rigging of the vessel ; again the scene would change, visions of another hemisphere and of a far different station in life would float before him, nobles and princes swarmed in the glittering throng, light low laughter rang in silvery sounds around, a strain of soft melody commenced slow, and solemn at first, as if it were destined to recall the memory of bright days long gone, though sometimes a lighter air would creep in for a moment, just heard and lost, until at length a graceful modulation changed the character of the music, and once more high-born beauty floated on the arm of the dreamer through the mazes of the waltz. Again his thoughts would take a darker hue, and scenes of guilt and depravity in which he had formerly been engaged, would rise in evidence before his eyes ;—the day wore on in gloom and horror, and once again the sun went down upon the succourless ship.

Night came, and the breeze still freshened, and still the vessel drove madly on like a riderless horse,—the blast howled and screamed. and whistled among the overstrained rigging, the waves followed fast behind, but none broke over, though sometimes their crests appeared as if they were curling over her quarter : every plunge she made, half buried her bows, sending showers of spray up to the tops ; every mast complained, every timber creaked, and still before the eyes of the murderer alone on the ocean, floated the trunkless head of his victim in every variety of horror that memory, in the presence of death, can summon from the realms of dark shadows. Sometimes the eyes would open and fix on him with a stony glare that chilled the very blood in his heart, sometimes the lips would part and a few moaning words would escape them,—of a sinful man cut off in his sins,—unprepared,—no thought of mercy,—no time for repentance ;—again that ghastly apparition would assume a threatening aspect, and seem to summon him to answer for the deed at the eternal throne, boding and terrible words came in a still small voice that was yet distinct and overpowered the howling tempest. ‘ Evil shall haunt the violent man,’ ‘ whoso sheddeth man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed,’—gaunt characters seemed written in fire, the sentences of a Judge whose judgment-seat is the throne of eternity.

Once more a change would come over the ghastly phantom—a hideous alteration, the convulsive distortions of deadly fear would overspread the features, and again they would assume the form they wore in that last moment of agony, when the terrified yell and disregarded prayer of the victim had failed to arrest the uplifted arm of the slayer. Maddened by the sight that could not be driven away—shrinking from his thoughts, looking upon the past with horror, upon the present with more horror, and upon the future with yet more horror, Hastings sprang to his feet, and hid his eyes in his hands, striving in vain to banish the hideous image ;—still the words rang in his ears, the doom of blood was recorded, the seal of Cain was on his brow, and at last he flung himself in utter desperation on the deck, and lay in a stupor that was yet not sleep. He knew not and recked not that as the ship drove on amid the howling of the gale and the heavy splash of

the waves, the swaying and straining of the masts had worked what was an unimportant leak in the morning into a dangerous rent, through which the water was now rapidly entering, and that the Albatross could not swim many hours.

But another vessel now demands our attention, we left our friends in the Arab crowding all sail to avoid the unwelcome visit of an Egyptian frigate, a visit, which, however, they were doomed to undergo.

"I think we shall have to lay to, for these ruffians," said Harry, to Lord de Creci, as the Egyptian frigate, looking almost as if one of their own pyramids had taken the sea, courses, top-sails, top-gallant-sails, royals and sky-scrapers, studdingsails and all set, till it seemed wonderful, how the comparatively insignificant hull could support such a mountain of canvass, came ploughing through the water, and every now and then giving token of her existence, by sending a shot booming along the waters, "I suppose, from the flag she carries, she must have some officer of rank on board; she's not a pirate at all events. I take it, we shall have to lay to."

"I rather think so, too," answered Lord de Creci, with a smile, as a shot went whizzing through the Arab's mainsail, a mode of addressing a ship, that admits of no mistake; and the necessary directions were given for awaiting the visit of the strangers.

The frigate passed at no great distance from the schooner, but without hailing, she however lowered a boat, into which an officer descended, and pulled towards the Arab. The officer seemed a most impressive specimen of the Turco-Egyptian army, or navy, for it was not easy to distinguish to what force he belonged. He was magnificently dressed, absolutely hung round with pistols and daggers, and of colossal stature; and his crew, after a reasonable amount of bungling, having succeeded in getting along side of the schooner, he mounted her side, and was received at the gangway by Lord de Creci.

"Salam aleicoum," said the Earl.

"God save all here," answered the Turk, "How are you, my Lord, —and that's you is it, Captain,—he's a mighty conthrairy fellow, that Captain Hardcastle of yours; you'd have had a pretty little affair with Fitz, if it wasn't for him,—sure, when two gentlemen are agreed to quarrel, what the divil does it matter what it's about,—he was amazingly tightlaced."

To recognise the speaker by his appearance, would have been impossible, so complete was the outward metamorphosis; but the rich brogue, and allusion to the scene enacted at the barracks of Ballymacdaniel in behalf of Mr. Fitzgerald, at once assured the Captain that he was standing in the presence of Mr. Cadwallader Fitzcrackenthorpe MacGillicuddy, late of the Croation Grensefeldjägers, and now one of Mehemet Ali's Principal Inspectors of Bridges and Highways, a post for which his qualification consisted in having once succeeded in getting a presentment for a bridge passed through the Clare Grand jury, and subsequently, a road to lead to the bridge. His mission in visiting the Arab, was to inquire whether they happened to have such a thing on board as a map of Syria, or a chart of the coast; the Egyptian staff not possessing either of these articles, though according to European

notions of warfare, they certainly might have been of some use in invading the country ; at least, so thought Suleiman Bey, as soon as he got over his sea-sickness. His Lordship did possess such an article to spare, and as he descended to fetch it, Mr. MacGillicuddy turned to Harry, with an air of easy familiarity, as if it was quite pleasant to meet an old friend in the Levant.

"Well, Captain," said he, "you're leaving Syria at the right time, it would soon be too hot to hold you, there's the Pasha swears he'll play the devil in the Holy Land."

"Who have you got on board the frigate?" asked Harry, "not the Pasha himself?"

"No," returned the other, "Ibrahim, and Suleiman Bey, as sharp a lad as ever you set eyes on,—he's a Frenchman, one of ould Nap's training, that's him there, on the quarter-deck."

"I see:" replied Harry, "and where is Ibrahim?"

"You can't see him," replied the Inspector of Bridges and Highways, "he's below, it's his time of day for being dead drunk ; by the by, that reminds me, Captain, that I had a letter the other day from your friend Fitz. He got into a scrape at Lord Ellesmere's, and got the sack."

"Got the what?" asked Harry.

"Got the sack,—got turned out of the house; he wants to come out here, for he hears the Pasha is a great improver, and he's got a new system of reclaiming bogs, by subsoil drainage, as practised in the County Galway, that he thinks might be useful in Egypt. I don't think he'll make his fortune that way, any more than by marrying Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine."

"Ah!" said Harry, "was that what he quarelled with the Ellesmeres about?"

"Quarelled!" repeated the other, "he'd have seen them in Jericho before he'd have quarelled with them if he could have helped it ; no, by Jove, they packed him off with a prodigious flea in his ear,—he was caught out kissing the governess."

"What?" said Harry, in a tone that made the other start back a step.

"Caught out kissing the governess," repeated Mr. MacGillicuddy ; "you remember her, sure you dragged her out of the fire at Avonmore yourself, like a broiled herring, a mighty genteel young lady she was too all the same, Miss Hastings, I'll shew you the letter—no, I haven't got it about me,—that's the worst of not being in a christian country, you've got no breeches pockets."

"But what did happen?" asked Harry, who began to feel a very considerable interest, even in the absurd gabble of the other, now that it concerned Clara.

"Would you like to see it? I'll send to the frigate for it," and upon our hero's expressing some interest upon the subject, he addressed one of the boat's crew in a curious sort of lingua-franca, composed of modern Greek, Italian, Turkish, and Arabic, strongly dashed with some Slavonic dialect he probably had picked up in the Austrian service, and delivered in a rich Tipperary brogue,—and the boat pulled back to

the frigate, with orders to bring on board the schooner, an important dispatch, marked private and confidential, Drainage and Irrigation, postmark Ballymacdaniel, in the escritoire of His Excellency the Inspector of Bridges and Highways.

"Do you see those fellows?" said the Austro-hiperno-turko-egyptian; "there are eight of them at the oars, and eight eyes among them. They put out their eyes that they might not be pressed, so what does the Pasha do, but he forms one eyed regiments, one eyed gangs of labourers, and every ship has a one eyed gang to do the hard work."—Harry heard not a word of all this. Had he had sixteen or eighteen eyes, they would all have been fixed upon the boat, which seemed to him to crawl, though she in reality shot over the water, as fast as eight pair of arms could spin her along;—he thought she never would return, which was a mistake of his, for she did return, bringing the letter in question, which he forthwith perused or rather devoured, though he could not be said to swallow everything therein contained,—

"Dear Mackie,

"A friend in need is a friend indeed, and I depend upon you're lending me a hand, for I've put my foot in it. Oh Mackie, never if you can possibly help it, let two women make love to you at once, they're sure to knock their heads together, and then all the fat's in the fire in half no time; the Kilkenny cats are a joke to them. You never saw such a chance as I had at Ellesmere. There was I—who but me?—as free and easy, as if I was my Lord's *drole de corps*; his Lordship asking me to take wine with him every day, as sure as the second course, my Lady bidding me ring the bell like a tame rabbit, my Lady Sarah asking me all day long about the old Earls of Desmond and Kildare, and Vesey Fitzgerald, and the Clare Election, and why the Duke of Leinster had a monkey on his arms? how it came into the family? and all the rest of my genealogy;—and there was my Lady Madelaine, but this is between you and me,—consulting me in a private way about the common people, what they wanted, and what they did'nt, and about the small pox and wet feet, and the blackguard-boys with their sore heads, and the priests and the dispensaries, and turf-cutting, and the like, all confidentially mnd; those were great days: I was getting on swimmingly—like a house on fire, when all of a sudden, as the devil would have it, nothing would serve the governess,—a slip of a girl called Hastings, you remember, that had her shift burned off her back at the fire of Avonmore—well, Sir, nothing would content her, but she must fall in love with me too, flop over head and ears, like a salmon in a weir, not that I cared for that, one's used to that sort of thing you know, if they'd only have come one at a time, but here I had a pair of them on my hands, as the devil said of his two legs; and they soon came together by the ears, it was too many cooks that spoilt the broth,—and just as I was all right and tight with Lady M. and had made an assignment with her to meet in private, when we might talk quietly over some little matters that only concerned ourselves, the governess, (them women are as cunning as weasels), got wind of it, and nothing would do her, but she must come herself, and by Job, we were caught out. There was a go,

there was no keeping it quiet ; and my Lady Marchioness you know, who was always as great and grand as the Lord Chancellor, tipped me a hint that my room would be more agreeable than my company ;—sure it was her own fault, she ought to have had a decent young woman for a governess, but I knew my Lady M. would never forgive me, she would not be a raal woman if she did, so I walked my chalks ; and here I am with the three Miss F.'s scolding me like the hags on Loch Corrib. Mackie the place is too hot to hold me, I'd be the laugh of the whole country side, if they catch hold of the story ; they'll be saying, that's the lad that shot at the pigeon and hit the crow, (confound him, parenthesised Harry), it would be as bad as the old chap that six girls refused one after the other, till they christened him the Solicitor-General so, as the fashionable papers say, it will be necessary for me to travel on the Continent, till the affair blows over ; so I'm thinking of coming out to you in Egypt, for I'm told there's a great opening for a rising man, and I'd like to let my Lady Marchioness of Ellesmere know what sort of a jockey it is she's affronted. Now, as Egypt's a mighty wet place in the rainy season, there's a new plan for draining the bog of Allen with longitudinal drains and hexagonal cuttings, that might be found valuable, or may be the running a railway along the banks of the Nile, like the Dublin and Kingstown, or steam coaches to Jerusalem or the like, in short, there's lashings of new inventions, that I'd like to stick into Mehemet Ali amazingly, so I depend upon you to let me know how I may distinguish myself ; any how, if you think I'd better come, I'll come. They've got the turf in down here, the most of it at least, and potatoes is 3½d. a stone, oatmeal's cheap, but the boys have not the money to buy it with. Old MacGallagher is to be the new agent, which the tenants are mighty glad of, for he isn't half as big a blackguard as the last one ; and I saw the mare you gave Lord William, running in one of of Bianconi's cars. She's gone stone blind they tell me, but that 'll be no news to *you*, so no more at present, from your sincere friend,

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK FITZGERALD.

“ P.S. Lord de Creci and our friend Mowbray, will be cruising somewhere about your parts, they say the Earl is after a Greek Princess that he's fallen in love with, but that's nothing to me, my connection with that noble family is broken off for ever.”

It cannot exactly be said that our hero smiled at this precious production, for he was in no humour for smiling ; nor can it be averred that he frowned, for it was out of the question frowning ; he gravely folded it up, and returning it to MacGillicuddy, was on the point of recommending him to put it into any part of his Mahometan attire, that could be christianized into a breeches pocket, before Lord de Creci reappeared, when that nobleman returned to the deck with the maps that were to guide the operations of the Egyptian army, and a few bottles of rosoglio for its chief, and enquiring what were the news from home, was forthwith referred to the letter by its puzzled owner. It did not however, produce in him the effect that Harry had anticipated, for it amused him hugely ; the idea of any awkwardness arising to the family of Ellesmere, from any thing that such a person

as Mr. George Augustus Frederick Fitzgerald could do, say, think, or write, never once occurred to him, and he laughed more heartily than Harry had ever seen him laugh before.

"Upon my word, Mr. MacGillicuddy," said he, when he had concluded its perusal, "this is too valuable a document to perish in Syrian warfare, you really ought to give it to me, that we may preserve it among the archives of Ellesmere."

"Faith, you're heartily welcome to it, my Lord," returned the other, as he prepared to return to his boat, "it's little use it is to me, barring the lighting of a pipe or the like, keep it and welcome;—pull away my hearties;—sit down you blackguard," and he knocked down the stroke oar, who, upon Lord de Creci leaning over the bulwark, had suddenly jumped up, apparently to speak to him.

"I have certainly seen that man before, somewhere or other," said his Lordship, as the boat pulled back to her ship, and the man sullenly resuming his oar, returned to his task in silence. As soon as she got her boat on board again, the frigate bore away on her former course, firing a gun by way of thanks, which they seemed to have forgotten was shotted, but the shot passed over their heads, the schooner filled and stood away to the North-west, and a few minutes consideration, determined Harry to make the Earl his confidant, as to the state of matters between him and Clara Hastings. Lord de Creci listened to his whole story with great attention, and more appearance of sympathy than Harry had supposed *him* likely to afford to a love affair.

"I am exceedingly sorry," he said, "for though I do not attach the slightest importance, or by any means give credit to the mountebank braggadocio of this idiot, still it is one of those cases of where there is much smoke, there must be some fire; it is clear, something unfortunate has happened about Miss Hastings; and it would give me the most sincere pain, if anything that could occur in our house, should in the slightest degree affect your future prospects of happiness:"—here he paused as if some reflection of the past checked his utterance, and the idea involuntarily suggested itself to Harry, that his companion had himself suffered some disappointment in love, that still rankled at his heart. "I know," continued Lord de Creci, "that Lady Ellesmere is scrupulously, I think pedantically particular about Emily's governesses, and I certainly imagined from what Madelaine told me, that she had found everything that she could desire in Miss Hastings, but however, I no more believe, that she really went to meet this pompous blockhead in the way he describes, than that my own sister promised to meet him to give him what he calls an assignment, or that I myself am roaming about the Levant in search of a Greek Princess. I am afraid we have no chance of letters from home, no one knows where to direct, we shall not clear the mystery till we reach England; so in fact, the only thing to do, is to get home as fast as we can, so we must give up our cruise among the Greek Islands, Princess, and all, and set the old barkey's head homewards." Before Harry had well completed his thanks, for this considerate change in his host's arrangement, the Arab's course was

altered a few points to the southward, and all the canvass she could stagger under, was helping her on her homeward voyage.

One day passed like another, nothing occurred to break the monotony of their course, as league after league melted away into the sea, and was no more between them and their home. O'Driscoll and Bluthenbaum found entertainment for the forecastle, by fighting their battles over again, and comparing the one's experience with the Burmese, with the other's of the Cossacks, the result of which comparison was the unanimous conclusion, that the one were devils on horseback, and the others devils on foot, as expressed by O'Driscoll. Harry got hold of an almanack, and kept perpetually looking at it, as if he hoped to stare some day or other out of countenance, and persuade it to vanish out of his way; they had several first rate telescopes on board, but there was nothing to look at, and not much daylight to look in, for the sun rose tediously late, and set inconveniently early; nature, however, with her customary skill, has contrived an admirable remedy for the tedium of a voyage; men are always hungry, and there is plenty to eat, and as by another excellent arrangement of hers, her head coachman, Time, never pulls up, our homeward-bound travellers, despite their impatience, managed some how or other to survive each weary evening, and to revive each dreary morning, and on, on, on, went the Arab over the foam, ploughing and splashing through the seas, as if thrusting them out of her way, creaking and complaining, as if whispering and whining with impatience, as she neared the Pillars of Hercules. The iron girdled rock of Gibraltar rose on the bow, frowned for an hour on the fleeting vessel, and sunk on the quarter, and still the Arab held her course unrelenting. Lord de Creci invigorated by the sea breezes, had got better from day to day; and was once more himself, and the third morning after they had passed the straits of Gibraltar, he addressed himself to Harry, once more on the subject of the sailor, who had wanted to speak to him from the boat of the Egyptian frigate.

"I am quite certain I have seen that man's face before," said he, "but I cannot remember where, and yet I wish I had spoken to him."

"He wanted to speak to you evidently," answered Harry, "probably he was a servant of yours when you were here before, or in some crew you sailed with; perhaps he might have shared your captivity."

"Possibly," returned the Earl musing, "probably the latter.—yet still I have an idea that it was not, I wish I had heard all that he had to say, I ought to have done so; it has weighed on my mind all yesterday. Do you know that depressing feeling that makes every thing gloomy, when every unkind word you ever spoke, every harsh act you ever did, the good that you neglected, the evil that you recked not of, rise up in judgment against you; when the dark days of the past appear leagued together against you, and seem to say, you are unfit to live—die—so I felt all yesterday:" and he slowly paced backwards and forwards—suddenly he stopped, a strong emotion passed over his countenance,—he struck his forehead with his clenched hand.

"Fool!" exclaimed he, "I remember now, well,—the man was on board the vessel I was in, before I was wrecked; I recollect him

now : yet any day he may be killed ; I must return to Acre. Go about "

"Ready about," was the answer. The hands scrambled to their stations ; and Harry could hardly believe his eyes, when he saw the sails once again fill, with the Arab's head to the southward. He knew nothing about Lord de Creci's motives, and whilst he began almost to doubt his sanity, he was by no means insensible to the inconvenience to which this sudden change would subject himself. Indeed, Lord de Creci seemed for the moment to have forgotten that such a person as Harry existed, or that he could have any earthly motive for wishing to reach England speedily. Our hero was now in a somewhat disagreeable predicament, within three or four days' sail of the coast of England, and yet gliding to the southward at the rate of ten knots an hour ; he saw that there was something that moved Lord de Creci ; but did not like to remonstrate,—when suddenly he was aroused from his meditations by a cry that is never unheeded at sea.

"A sail, on the starboard bow !"

All eyes were turned to the westward, as the rigging and sails of a large vessel seemed to rise up out of the sea ; royals, top-gallant-sails, topsails, courses, then the black hull beneath, and it was clear that the two vessels must pass close to one another. The men clustered on the forecastle to watch the stranger, and discuss the sudden change in the Earl's intentions. But there was something in the look of the approaching vessel, that soon attracted the sailors' notice.

"She steers wild," said one.

"Her main-royal is in ribbons, and no one minds it," said another.

"Take care it ain't the Flying Dutchman," said O'Driscoll.

"Hush !" said a veteran quarter-master ; "avast skylarking,—it's ill playing with edge tools ; it is no joke when Vanderdecken sends his letters on board ;—they'd sink the best sea-boat that ever swam."

But still under a press of canvass ; but clearly under no human guidance, that strange ship,—a floating riddle,—came on like a midday apparition to bewilder the crew of the Arab ; and to say truth, their bewilderment was not unmixed with fear.

CHAPTER XLIV.

RAIN, rain, rain,—nothing but rain ;—will it never cease raining ? —the sun rises unseen and sets unmissed ; there have been stars, and there was a moon, where are they now ? nobody answers, for nobody knows,—where is the lost Pleiad ?—there is mist above, and gloom below, a drizzling sky, and a dripping earth, and still undaunted and unretarded, time goes on, as a life-boat breasts the surf, shaking off events like spray, and opinions like foam ; plunging, and splashing, bruising and battling through that faint image of old chaos, an English November night,—still on, on, on, its progress and position, known and marked like that of a ship in a fog, only by the bell that strikes incessantly ; it seems as if the office of the English winter was to wash away from the piteous face of the earth all traces of the seasons that went before it, and down comes the rain, not with the half laughing, half blustering playfulness with which summer flings her sparkling showers, like diamond dust upon the variegated web that mother earth weaves day and night without pause to her eternal shuttle, or complaint of her perishable materials, in her heaven-appointed task of turning all things to fitness, the true nurse of beauty ; no, no, not so, there is a time for all things, and we all know that there is a time for rain in England, no man hath yet fixed its limit, down it comes, Sundays and all, with a steady, ceaseless down-pouring, a silent earnestness, as if the clouds, in spite of their flightiness, knew their work and meant to perform it ;—still rain, the sunless day went down and left a starless sky in mourning for it, a single bell struck solemnly the march of passing hours, but was instantly echoed by a hundred brazen tongues, for its first vibrations had not died away, before a hundred steeples clamoured forth, from north and south, and east and west, that the world had once more rolled over another day with all its load of doing and undoing, into the abyss that is the home of the past. Clang upon clang, peal upon peal, near and far. Reader, the scene which we must now describe has its place neither in the solitude of the ocean, nor the retirement of Somerton, nor the seclusion of Ellesmere, but in the neighbourhood of London.

The face of the globe probably presents no such contrast in architectural whims and fancies, as does the neighbourhood of London. The ever varying humours of the most self-willed and mood-ridden nation that exists, the ever upspringing novelties that the prolific brains of a race of projectors engaged in a desperate struggle for existence can produce ; the before undreamed of objects that day by day open out on the path of a people that have never once stood still since the moment that The leading Roman struck out at the leading Briton, and could hardly tell what marked the spot his sword pierced,—the blood of the man, or the paint of the savage ; the outlandish fantasies that the men who ceaselessly circumnavigate the globe bring home,

screwed into their very existence, by the isolation of the ship, the strange and fantastic recollections of the wanderers by land and sea, who, without object that they know of themselves, yet perform no mean part in the great drama of the world, and guided by that inscrutable restlessness, that strange instinct, that 'vorwärts' pulsation inherent in their Anglo-Saxon blood, that ever whispers 'on ! on ! on !' prowl over the face of the earth, the unconscious pioneers of the energetic race that is silently absorbing its surface, and who bring back temple and tower, pavilion and pagoda, the ponderous sturdiness of Egypt, the fantastic airiness of China, the graceful harmony of Greece, beautiful for itself, but invested with a sadder beauty for the thoughts of the lofty spirits that conceived it, and that are now no more on their own soil, the modifications of stern Rome, haughtily, yet vainly striving to improve the perfect, the heavy Palladian that followed, the wooden cottage of the Swiss, the verandah of Calcutta, the cupola and minaret of the Golden Horn, the imaginative tracery of the Saracen's pavilion, to match and contrast with the varying architecture of their native land, the Saxon pile, and the Norman tower, the half fortress, half abbey of a later age, bartizan and battlement, arch and spire, mingling like mailed prelate and cross-bearing knight, the frowning parapet of Plantagenet, the rustic dignity of Tudor, the exotic formality of Stuart, the heavy stateliness of Guelph, all compressed in hundreds of hundreds in the spreading suburbs of London, to say nothing of the mixed multitude, whose name is legion, that have neither shape, proportion, order, character, nationality, beauty, or usefulness, in whose stones may be found sermons to the text 'all men have fancies, few have taste.'

In one of these lies our present business ; it stood close to an unfrequented road, but with a small piece of ground tastefully laid out spreading behind it. It was built in the style that is native to the soil, rich without being florid, suited by its comprehensiveness to all buildings of all sizes and characters, yet marking by its distinctiveness, all and each for its own, that is now happily rising like a Phoenix from its ashes and pushing aside the hybrid abortions of the Græco-italian ; it was the Elizabethan Gothic. — yet it had seen no civil war, for a quarter of a century had not elapsed since it was founded ; there was buttress and pinnacle, mullion and corbel, yet was not devoted to prayer ; its pleasure grounds were scrupulously preserved, yet it was not a villa ; its windows were strongly barred, yet it was not a prison ; its origin and end were in accordance with one, another, for it was first built by a spendthrift and now tenanted by lunatics.

Within one of the principal rooms in the building, one which in its days of splendour had been the luxurious private sitting room of an accomplished roué, sat now two individuals, one a light haired fair complexioned man, with little to distinguish him, except perhaps a peculiar directness of look, of which experience had probably taught him the value in dealing with his unruly patients, the other was Sir Thomas Horton, who had now been some time an inmate of the asylum, and whose case had been progressing so favourably that considerable hopes were entertained even by the experienced principal of the institution, of his eventual recovery. very relaxation consistent with the security of his person had been long

since granted him, and no one looking at that room would have dreamed of its employment. By day-light indeed, it was otherwise; there is no mistaking barred windows; but then, with the curtains drawn, the fire blazing in the grate, the rich carpet, well cushioned sofas, comfortable furniture, brilliant wax lights, with a tray containing a few oranges, sandwiches, and soda water, on a side-table, it seemed as comfortable an apartment as heart could desire for two gentlemen to finish a sociable game of chess in, for such was their occupation.

"Check," said Sir Thomas.

"Check," repeated the other thoughtfully;—"you are getting the better of me this game."

"Yes, and at another game, my friend," muttered the maniac.

"I suppose this is my best move," said the physician, who rather rejoiced at the improvement in Sir Thomas's playing, as hoping that he could trace in the power of combination that it indicated, a sounder state of mind, he made what he thought a tolerably safe move.

"Check-mate," said Sir Thomas, and it was even so.

"We have been later than usual, to-night, Sir Thomas," said the doctor, looking at his watch; "you come on wonderfully in your play."

"Wait till you see me go off in earnest," muttered the maniac.

"That last move of yours really surprised me," continued the other, departing.

"My next will astonish you, my boy," said Sir Thomas to himself, as his keeper shut the door; and the other had hardly left the room—before the unfortunate man proceeded to put his long and carefully-concealed plan into execution.

All the so called implements of self-destruction had been removed from the apartment; no razor tempted him with its glitter like the flame that lures the poor moth to its destruction; no bell rope had suggested the death he had proposed for Lady Sarah; poison of course was out of his reach, and though a river wound through the grounds, the strongly barred windows forbade that mode of self-destruction. But one singular neglect left the maniac free to follow his impulse wherever it should lead him. We have already remarked that he was considered so nearly cured, that though all reasonable precautions had been taken, still it was not considered necessary to subject him either to personal restraint, or to the personal presence of a keeper, and scarcely was the principal of the institution out of the room, before, with a grin of triumph, he walked to the fire-place and seized the fire-irons which had inadvertently been left there. He then deliberately raked out the fire, extinguished the light, and opening the window, commenced, by the powerful leverage of the poker, displacing the bars on the outside, some of which he had already, with the enduring patience that belongs only to the prisoner seeking escape, contrived to wear away by the aid of a pair of nail scizzors, till they could no longer offer any very effective resistance.

A powerful wrench, and one of the principal bars took the form of a bow, another tug, it curved yet more, once again with bent brow, compressed lips, and hands that felt as if they were seared with molten iron, the lunatic threw his weight into the temporary crow-bar, the strong iron yielded, the framework of the grating parted, and a bar fell clat-

tering to the ground, but the rain came heavy and incessant, deadening and absorbing all other sounds in its monotonous patter; if any in that house had heard the bar fall, they did as most people do when they hear a strange and doubtful sound, viz. listened for its repetition till they forgot its having occurred. The lunatic was not deficient in cunning, for a full hour did he stand there, motionless, listening, if perchance the sound had attracted notice, but no one stirred; he addressed himself to his task again, long and weary as it was, but the ocean-warrior had seen by what slight means, enforced by the irresistible power of enduring patience, apparent impossibilities are accomplished, he had seen even such a mass as the trunnion of a gun yield to a common sledge hammer in the end, and still he laboured, bar after bar gave way, till at last a sufficient opening was left for the body of a man to pass through. He looked out there, and even through the darkness of the night could see that he had still a difficult task before him, for the ground was far below, and his object at this time seems to have been more escape than suicide. He entered his bedroom, and it once commenced the manufacture of a cord from strips of the sheets, which he twisted, plaited, and knotted, with the dexterity of an old sailor, till he had a length that he judged would enable him to reach the ground in safety. All this he did with care and patience; it took time, and the grey of the morning was already rolling upwards from the east when his preparations were complete.

* * * * *

Morning came, the royal city, and its giant brood of suburbs, woke heavily with a startled hum and a growing murmur from its slumbers, and none woke to more active and anxious life, than the scene of the escape we have just described. There was no need to force the rooms to search for Sir Thomas Horton, the open window, the destroyed grating, the dangling rope, all announced clearly enough what had taken place; on the grass lay a length of about four feet which had parted at the end, and upon this the marks of blood shewed that his fall had not been without some injury to himself, but what was become of him?—no one could tell where he had gone; he seemed to have vanished, and left no trace behind;—none had seen him; nor could the mode by which he had escaped from the grounds be discovered;—all the water in the neighbourhood was dragged, but the body was nowhere to be found, and the whole day passed without tidings of what had befallen him.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE Arab and the strange ship now rapidly neared one another ; but it was remarked that her progress was by no means commensurate with the quantity of sail she had set ; at last, however, the two were within hailing distance—the Arab hailed, but no answer was returned.

"I see no one on deck," said the master, "except the man at the helm, and he's either asleep or drunk ; the helm's lashed too ; I think she's water-logged, my Lord."

"Try her with a gun," replied the Earl ; but the report failed to call attention from the ship.

"She takes no notice of it," remarked the man who fired.

"Av coorse not," replied Jerry, "sure it ain't shotted."

"Clear away the boat there," said the Earl.

"I'll go on board," said Harry, "and see where they are bound.—I must get to England as fast as I can, they may give me a passage."

"Forgive me, Mowbray," said the Earl ; "it was a hasty impulse that made me change our course this morning ; you would forgive it if you knew what good reason I have for wishing to speak to that man that I saw in the Egyptian frigate's boat ; but a few days more or less cannot make very much difference ; we will go straight to England the moment we have overhauled this vessel ; I shall go on board too, she seems in distress."

"I think she's sinking, my Lord," said the master, as his Lordship and Harry descended into the boat.

The motion of the strange ship had now become so slow that the boat pulled easily alongside, and with some difficulty from the want of the usual help from within, Harry clambered up her side, and there a horrible scene presented itself. The man slept heavily by the helm. two or three corpses lay putrefying on the deck, and the vessel was evidently settling fast by the head. Harry shook the sleeper roughly by the shoulder ; the man opened his eyes, and stared vacantly at him for a moment, and then relapsed into a stupor, from which our hero could not succeed in rousing him, until he had dashed some water in his face, when he sat up once more thoroughly awake, and seemed to understand the inquiring look of the two strangers.

"They're all dead this week," said he, "poisoned by fishes,—I never thought I should wake again."

"Come, rouse up, and come with us ; it's impossible to save the vessel," said Lord de Creci.

"She deserves to be d—d," remarked the survivor, bitterly.

"She's sinking, my Lord," cried the coxswain from the boat.

"I don't want much notice to quit," observed Hastings, as they descended into the boat, and pulled rapidly on board the Arab. As they mounted the side, the Albatross yet floated, but had almost entirely lost her way ; they descended into the cabin to hear what



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strange story the mariner, thus snatched from the jaws of death, might tell, but scarcely had they arrived there, before a startled clamour arose upon deck.

"What's the matter," called out Harry, up the companion.

"She's given three rolls, Sir, and gone to h—ll," was the answer; and running hastily upon deck, he looked out upon the unbroken expanse of the sea; a spar or two hurried wildly round and round in the eddies of a whirlpool that another instant smoothed off from the face of the ocean as if it never had been there, a solitary sailor's hat, and a few bubbles, alone marked the spot where the Albatross had been. Her place on the waters was empty.

It is needless to recapitulate the story of the terrible scourge that had already swept away her crew from the ranks of the living, as Hastings told it to Lord de Creci. Our readers are already acquainted with the details of that catastrophe, but we may remark, that in his manner of telling it there was something peculiar. True, he did not allude to the discovery of the head of the man he had murdered, which, indeed, had no necessary connection with the circumstances of the loss of the ship, but he seemed ill at ease; he looked askance at Lord de Creci, as if he recognised but wished to avoid him, he went forward and mixed with the crew as soon as he possibly could; and though he seemed eager to attract Harry's notice, and to enter into conversation with him, he still avoided Lord de Creci's eye, not a very difficult thing to effect, for the Earl was plunged in deep abstraction, and it was quite clear, that though he felt himself bound to land his passengers, it was against his will that he was now proceeding to England; indeed, the inquiries he made about the provisions on board, and the directions he gave about taking in water the instant they arrived, shewed that he contemplated an immediate return to the East.

"Land, ho!" was the joyful cry that at last rang over the waters from the deck of the Arab, and the vessel dashed on as if she herself knew that she was returning home. At length the old square tower of Falconscrag appeared; Harry eagerly recognised one by one the familiar objects of the home of his childhood; he watched with a childish interest the preparations for anchoring off the castle; his heart leaped to his mouth at the final and welcome word "Let go the anchor;" and the rattle of the chain cable as it ran out was very sweet music in his ears. A boat was instantly lowered, and he went ashore with Hastings, who seemed in almost as great a hurry to land as himself; and whilst the former proceeded to deliver the packets entrusted to his charge to the poor boy's aunt, Harry made the best of his way to Falconscrag, where he found Clara's letter. He snatched it up in all the eagerness of hope, but had not opened it before an unlooked for interruption caused him to pause. A man rushed into the room wet, wild, and half clothed, in whom he had some difficulty in recognising Sir Thomas Horton.

"Save me! save me! Mowbray," cried the unhappy man, "the bloodhounds are upon me,—they say I am mad, the hellish liars!—I know you can shelter me,—remember the Irrawaddy."

Harry stared in amazement at this apparition, for he, it is to be recollected, knew nothing of Sir Thomas's madness, his confinement,

his escape, or even of his conduct towards Clara, but he *did* remember the Irrawaddy right well ; kindness was not readily effaced from such a memory as his, and seeing that Sir Thomas was clearly in some trouble of some sort or kind, (how he got into it, he did not consider necessary to inquire at the moment,) and being himself as decidedly in a most violent hurry, he got rid of both difficulties at once by killing two birds with one stone, without question asked, or explanation listened to, forthwith huddling him into the secret chamber, to whose history we have adverted in the earlier part of this story, and then addressed himself to the perusal of Clara's letter.

"I received your letter, my ever dear Harry, with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, that I cannot describe, and can hardly distinctly picture to myself. Joy and pride I did feel ; for I do not conceal from myself that I have been the chosen instrument of recalling you from a darkness I never could think of without shuddering,—sorrow, that my task of ministering to you is done,—at least in this world. Harry—I can never be your wife,—a blasted bridal, and a despised existence are not for you ; not that I believe that you, for a moment, would believe me guilty of the strange, ungrateful, degraded conduct that I have been accused of. I do not distrust you enough to think it necessary to deny it, fully, entirely ;—but unjust as it is, a stigma attaches to my name that I will not suffer you to share. I know your generous nature, Harry,—none shall ever say that I abused it. I shall not rouse your unavailing anger against a madman, by telling you at whose hands I have undergone this wicked persecution. The hand of the Lord was heavy on him ; he was not answerable, for he knew not what he did ; and I do not complain of the conduct of those at Ellesmere, they acted, as they thought, right, and still I received much kindness from them ;—do not, Harry, I entreat of you, let this interrupt your friendship with Lord de Creci,—he had no knowledge of what was done,—all that I beg of you, is to forget me, go on, in your course, prospering and to prosper,—*mine* cannot be joined with it ;—I have still a mother. I hardly know what I write, for my brain reels ; you will, however, understand me. Before you receive this, I shall be far away beyond your reach, beyond your power of tracing me.—Heaven defend you here, and hereafter."

Our hero read this in utter bewilderment, and once again read it without much light breaking in upon him. He then sat down half stupified, and endeavoured to collect his scattered faculties. It was, indeed, well that Clara had not been more explicit ; had she fully explained the real circumstances, it is impossible to say what tragedy might have followed the perusal of her letter at that moment. Unquestionably, Mowbray was a man of strong passions, and, once fairly roused, of a fierce temper ; there he stood, by the hearthstone of his ancestral hall, but a few minutes returned from a distant land, full of high hopes of coming happiness, to claim his bride, with those words of constancy and fidelity to which few women listen unmoved,—and to find the cup snatched from his lips by an invisible hand,—was that no trial for hot blood ? Had he known that at that very moment, under the very shelter of his roof, nay, in the very same room with himself, lurked the destroyer of his happiness, exulting, perhaps, at the wreck

he himself had made, to what stern debate would not that have given rise? what ghastly consequences might not the fierce clashing of exasperated men have brought on? True, even then, a gloomy tragedy hovered over the walls of Falconsrag; that night was not to pass without one of those terrible wrath-storms that from time to time glare out like demon visits in the midst of a peaceful land; but it was better that its owner should be stainless of blood.

It is to be remembered all this time, that our hero had not the slightest idea either that Sir Thomas Horton had been the unrelenting persecutor of Clara in his (supposed) sane mind, or that he was now a lunatic escaped from his keeper; he had seen no one since he landed, except Sir Thomas himself; and all that he could glean either from Clara's letter, or from that which Mr. MacGillicuddy had shewn him off the coast of Syria, had led him to fix upon Mr. Fitzgerald as the object of his indignation,—as the person whose unpardonable vanity had been the cause of so much evil to Clara and himself. Had that gentleman appeared he would probably have found himself in a dilemma from which all his ingenuity would not have extricated him; but Mr. Fitzgerald was at that moment in Dublin, making inquiries after a person who could teach him the Egyptian language, and slight as his prospects of success seemed in that search after a long vanished tongue, it was better than facing a disappointed lover. One thing, however, useless as it might be, remained for him to do; he found, upon inquiry, that though the Hastings were to leave Somerton on the morrow, they were still there,—and towards their residence he bent his steps.

Upon reaching the cottage, he found every thing in the confusion of a departure, and though his first impulse was to thank Heaven that he had arrived before they were actually gone, gone and for ever, he soon found that he had little to hope for from that apparently fortunate circumstance. He was received by Mrs. Hastings, whose altered appearance absolutely horrified him; it seemed as if she were dropping into her grave, such ravages had trouble and grief made upon her since they had parted, and though she received him kindly, with every appearance of affection and friendship, of cordial gratitude, and admiration of his constancy, still she gave him no hope of Clara's altering her resolution, and even seemed proud of her daughter's self-devotion in refusing to suffer him, how much soever she loved him, to be involved in the discredit of which she was the unhappy victim. It was a scene altogether of a painful character, and often did Mrs. Hastings beseech him to close it, to depart and leave them to the obscurity and seclusion that was now all they desired upon earth. Still he could not tear himself away, still he urged with passionate energy, all the pleas with which love furnishes his votary—how unjust, it was to make him the victim of a supposed weakness of his own, that had no existence except in their imaginations—how light he held the sneers of the world, as compared with the possession of her—how certain Time, the great redresser of injuries, was to do justice to the innocent in the end—how much the more, in her difficulty and distress, she stood in need of a protector—and how much, oh, how much the more, that very difficulty and distress, demanded that he should take upon himself, that holy and

coveted office ;—all this he urged but urged in vain. It affected Mrs. Hastings deeply, but she still had no hopes to hold out to him, she knew Clara's nature, she knew the firmness of her resolution, she knew what a stubborn spirit is the spirit of self-sacrifice,—the spirit from on high, whose glorious records are written in characters of blood and fire, yet lofty and lovely characters nevertheless, in the brightest pages of the chronicles of the universe ;—all this she knew, and she answered resolutely and fearlessly for Clara as she would have done for herself ; but she also knew that willing though the spirit might be, the flesh was weak ; she dreaded the effects of a violent racking agitation upon Clara's fragile frame, and she positively refused to suffer the interview that Henry earnestly demanded, that he might learn his fate from her own lips, to take place.

"It can do no good," said she, "what Clara feels it her duty to do, that she will certainly do ; no efforts of yours will turn her from the path of right, now as before, nor will it add to your happiness, seeing her once to lose her again directly ; but remember, my dear Harry, that this interview may kill her. You do not know the state of debility to which she is reduced ; I have seen her to all appearance snatched from me, do not turn that image of death into a reality. She shall know all that you have said ; and I do not absolutely despair, but that the Power that watches over the fatherless and the widow, may in its own good time, remove the heavy burden from us ; but now go—you would never sleep again if you were to be the cause of Clara's death—remember," continued she, and here a shudder came over her, "remember, that too much agitation may madden."

Harry felt that he could say nothing in answer to this ; unwillingly, and perhaps a little ungraciously, he took his leave, and it was not until he had got about a quarter of a mile from the house, that he recollected that with characteristic impetuosity he had entirely forgotten to inquire what the accusation against Clara was ; who had brought it, or in fact, anything whatever about it. He had attached no credit to it whatever, nor much importance, except in so far, as it affected the relations between him and her ; all the object of his visit to Somerton, had been to endeavour to persuade her to change her resolution, failing in that, he cared little for the cause, and became reckless about almost every thing else in the world. He thought to investigate it, but it was too late to turn back ; Lord de Creci would probably furnish him with the details, and he bent his steps towards Falconsrag, as yet entirely ignorant of the deadly injury his concealed guest there had done him. The walls of Falconsrag, however, he was doomed not to enter again, till events had taken place, that no human foresight could have predicted, would have stamped that night in the memories of those concerned with them, with a vividness that belongs to but few recollections that the monotony of ordinary life affords.

Darkness was falling as he passed gloomily along, but the moon was up ; as he rounded a corner, which gave him a view of the ocean, the tapering spars and gossamer cordage of the yacht caught his eye ; he stopped, considered for a while, anathematised his fate, his friends, and his country, with a very hearty bitterness, and then in a hasty mo-

ment of mixed anger and disappointment, resolved to shew Clara that he too had a spirit of his own, and to return to Syria with Lord de Creci, and in five minutes more had found a shore boat and was pulling off towards the yacht. He met the Earl on the point of going on shore, for the moment that it was ascertained that the Arab had anchored under Falconsrag, Mr. Montague Marsden had despatched a note to his Lordship to request an immediate interview upon business of pressing importance, assigning as a reason for not waiting on the Earl on board, that he always found a difficulty in transacting any business at sea owing to a personal indisposition that kept him more (dis-)agreeably occupied. Lord de Creci upon the receipt of this, immediately prepared to go ashore, but when Harry came on board, and, evidently under the influence of great excitement, declared he never meant to visit England again, and asked for a passage to Syria, or Malta, or Gibraltar, or anywhere else, he expressed the most unbounded delight at the prospect of having his company again, and received his proposition with such warmth, that even in the disturbed state of mind in which he was, Harry could not help feeling the value of the reflection, that he still had one friend in the cheerless world.

"It is really turning a rough winter voyage, into a pleasure trip to me, your coming with me," said Lord de Creci, as he wrapped himself up in his pilot coat, "are you not coming ashore?"

"No," said Harry, "I hate the shore, I never shall touch English ground again; I shall stay on board, you will find dinner ready at Falconsrag, unless you prefer going to Mr. Marsden's, besides I wish to be alone."

Our readers will probably acquit Lord de Creci of the selfish pleasure that his words expressed, in having Harry's company, how much soever he might desire it himself, at the expense of a heavy misfortune to his companion. The fact was, that he saw plainly enough, that something very serious had taken place, and he conjectured that it was in connection with Clara Hastings, and singularly enough, he had in some degree already guessed the real truth, it seemed to him the course he should have liked a sister of his to have adopted under similar circumstances; he had some misgivings on his mind too, about the man Hastings, who he already had discovered, was cognisant of matters that were far above the condition of the second mate of a South Sea trader, if the Albacross were really a South Sea trader; for though her size forbade the idea that she was a pirate, still she might have been captured and in the possession of pirates, she might have been run away by a mutinous crew; no papers had been saved, and she had gone down so rapidly after he had boarded her, that he had had no time to make any examination into her character; all that he knew was, that there were several dead men lying on her deck, and but one alive; he was also not aware, of what very pressing business Mr. Montague Marsden could have with him,—altogether there were mysteries he could not solve in all directions, he saw that Harry was in no humour to bear inquiries, consolation, or advice, and wisely did the only thing he could do, welcomed him heartily, and as we have seen, made him feel that he had one true friend in the world at all events.

"Poor boy," said he to himself, as the boat shoved off; "we must

see about this,—I suppose this unfortunate business is crossing him,—I cannot believe that girl to be really bad, or Madelaine would not have taken such a fancy to her.—However, probably Marsden will be able to clear the mystery.”

Such thoughts as these passed through Lord de Creci's mind as the boat pulled rapidly towards the shore, and the towers of Falconsrag became every moment more and more the most prominent feature in the landscape. He had never seen the old castle before, and he gazed upon it with no little interest, for besides the strong personal partiality that bound him to our hero, he felt a sort of respect for the fallen fortunes of an antient name, he thought of the days of old, of the great feudal lords, the leaders of the feudal war, when Mowbray was a name that ranked with the highest, with Percy, Vere, Neville, Howard, Plantagenet, Bohun, Gray, Stanley, Tudor, Talbot. Devereux, Mortimer,—some withered away, some decayed, some yet flourishing; and he thought what a pride, and what an interest it would be to him, had he such a son as Harry to continue the long and time-honoured race of Fitzwarine.

“He is not free from faults,” continued he; “but who is? a character without a fault is commonly so, merely because there is nothing in it at all; one of his worst faults too, scepticism, is already gone, and that strikes away the ground from under most of the others,—they must follow; and in his character there is one strong point,—I have always observed that it is a rule of his conduct, that he never swerves from; he never, under any circumstances, will do that which will hereafter lower his own opinion of himself; a man who carries such a guide about with him, and adheres to it rigidly, can rarely go very far astray. He is a thorough gentleman besides,—and this is the castle of Falconsrag:”—and he concluded his reflections and his voyage together, as the boat pulled into a little sandy cove which lay almost directly under the castle, and afforded a convenient spot for beaching a boat.

A zig-zag path leading up the rock, here and there made easier by steps, conducted him to the principal entrance, and he stood for a moment looking at the castle that seemed to repose in the calm moonlight like a tomb to enshrine the old feudal times in, but his contemplation of these grey walls was soon disturbed. We have already, in our description of Falconsrag, in the beginning of this work mentioned, that a ruinous watch-tower at the eastern side of the castle, had become entitled, in the fulness of time and ivy, to the appellation of an aviary, it being entirely devoted to the reception and shelter of the feathered tribe, viz. owls. It seemed now as if the owls, in consideration of the antient destination of their present abode, had undertaken to watch for the castle, in the absence of its owner, and that the guard on duty had turned out to welcome or repel its new visitor, as the case might be, for just as Lord de Creci appeared at the gate, a whole troop of owls sailed confusedly forth with their loud hooting and their ungraceful flight. So sudden was the outburst, that it startled Lord de Creci for a moment; but as he bent his looks towards the tower, still more came out; it seemed as if some singular cause within was disturbing the venerable dwellers in the thick gnarled ivy that had grown into a crabb'd basket work of trunks of almost tree-like dimensions, both within and without. Still the owls kept fluttering and whooping about

him; all those who attempted to return being instantly repelled by something going on there that seemed to scare them away, till suddenly, as he watched the old tower brought out against the evening sky in clear relief, he observed the head of a man slowly raise itself above the mass of ivy that crowned its walls, the body followed, and at last the whole person of a tall, powerful man stood upon the very summit; yet it seemed as if the slightest breath of wind would blow him off like a feather, down, not only the height of the tower, but also the whole depth of the abrupt and craggy precipice upon which it stood. At the same moment a disturbance arose in the castle, he heard eager voices calling on one another, he saw lights hurrying about; a young girl ran hastily out, but returned no answer to his questions, and ran wildly towards some neighbouring cottages; that indefinite horror arose that never fails to accompany any great excitement, and Lord de Creci entered the castle and found it in a state of the utmost disorder.

To explain all this, we must state that, immediately after the note he had despatched to Lord de Creci, upon the appearance of the Arab, Mr. Montague Marsden, seeing the boat pull off for Falconsrag, naturally concluded that Lord de Creci, to whom he was anxious to communicate all the events that had taken place at Ellesmere since his departure, had landed in her and repaired to Falconsrag. Puffing alike with haste and impatience, he arrived at the castle just as O'Driscoll had completed the preparations for dinner, in the room which served Harry for both sitting and dining-room; for in the hurry and bustle of getting everything ready for his second start, Lord de Creci preferred dining on shore that evening; and Mr. Marsden, upon the news of this, seeing that his opportunity of communicating with the Earl would soon pass away, heroically resolved upon sacrificing a singularly delicate leg of Welsh mutton, which was revolving on the spit for his especial delight at Waterproof Lodge, and taking share of whatever the traveller's fare might be at Falconsrag; and having taken this resolution, and sent word home to that effect, Mr. Marsden established himself in the easiest chair he could find, and looked round to see how he might best solace the weary moments that must intervene before the arrival of the feast, such as it was, and seeing upon the table a small portfolio which contained Harry's sketches in the Holy Land, he commenced turning it over.

"The harbour of Acre," muttered he; "that's the place Sir Sydney Smith took so much trouble about; the ruins of Petra,—what could they have wanted in all those holes in the rock? the tomb of Aaron; what a hill to climb up," here he began nibbling at a bit of bread,—“what's this? Algiers?”—here he heard a slight rustling, or rather creaking behind him; but looking about saw nothing, except indeed that there was a bottle of sherry on the table, which suggested to him that a weak stomach requires an occasional stimulant, and he filled himself a glass; “what's this? the mountain in the land of Moriah, where Abraham was to have offered up Isaac.”

"This is the place the Lord pointed out, my beloved son Isaac," said a voice in his ear, that curdled the very blood in his veins; and looking round he found that at his elbow stood Sir Thomas Horton, who had already possessed himself of the carving knife.

Mr. Marsden was well acquainted both with the homicidal character of Sir Thomas's madness, and also with the fact of his having escaped from his asylum ; for he had already received a report on the case from the director of the institution, where the wretched man had been placed, —he saw at once the imminent danger in which he himself stood ; but lacked the physical courage that would have prompted a stouter heart to take the best chance of safety by anticipating the madman's attack ; and he sat there utterly voiceless and paralysed with fear, whilst the maniac contemplated the scene with a smile of ghastly approval.

"The Lord's commands must be obeyed, it is a blessed sacrifice," said Sir Thomas, with a hideous solemnity of manner ; "Isaac, my beloved, we shall meet again," —and he raised the knife in the act to strike ; at this instant a slight rustle was heard outside ; the handle of the door moved : "It is time," said he, and the knife descended ; but whether it was that the frenzy of the moment unstadied the hand of the maniac, or, what was not improbable from the malignant nature of his temper when sane, he took a cat-like pleasure in tormenting his victim, —the wound inflicted was but a slight one, a mere scratch.

"There's the ram struggling in the thicket," howled Mr. Marsden, for as the knife once again gleamed in the air, the handle of the lock turned, —the door opened, and Hastings, who had returned after delivering his sad message, entered.

"It was very nearly late," said the lunatic, catching at once at the idea, and turning towards the door ; but scarcely had he caught sight of Hastings, —whom it was evident he instantly recognised in spite of his rough and sailor-like appearance, —before all the delusions that he laboured under seemed to disappear and he absorbed in an access of ungovernable fury.

"What! *you* come here again?" said he ; "come to triumph over me, to reproach me, that I failed where you succeeded, you — rival — scoundrel — cumber the earth no more with your hateful presence." He rushed frantically at him ; but this time his hand was nerved by the frenzy of vengeance, and the life-blood spouted from Hastings' heart, as he rolled at the foot of the terrible maniac — a corpse.

Mr. Marsden looked on at this awful scene, with blank bewilderment ; his own sense of personal danger was exceedingly acute, but unhappily deprived him of the instinct of self-preservation ; he looked from the body to the murderer, from the murderer to the body, but utterly without the power of averting the next blow from himself, had it been so designed. Fortunately for him it was not so. The sight of the dead man, seemed to drive the demon of slaughter out of the breast of the lunatic ; he glared at him for a moment, then eyed Mr. Montague Marsden with an expression of terror, to which that gentleman most cordially responded, and finally rushed gibbering and muttering out of the room, and relieved from his presence, Mr. Marsden found utterance —

"Mad dog, — stop thief," shouted he in a quavering treble, — "stop thief, — murder, fire, — he's killed the smuggler, — help, — murder," —and his outcries soon brought O'Driscoll to his assistance. It was seen immediately that he was dead ; the knife had penetrated his heart, and the death of the unhappy man must have been instantaneous ; his troubles were over ; his crimes before a tribunal, where the temptation is weighed

against the act, where infinite mercy springs from omnipotent power. Mr. Marsden easily satisfied himself that he could be of no more use to the dead man, and proceeded with great care and attention to attend to the wants of the living, as personified in himself; the wound he had received was a mere skin deep cut, and even his own nervous apprehensions about himself, did not lead him to attribute any serious consequences to it; it was soon brought together with some plaster, and then he had time to consider what had become of Sir Thomas Horton. Just as this alarming idea forced itself upon his mind, the door opened, and Mr. Marsden at once, with a singular alacrity, dived under the table, and there relying on the good offices of one of his best and oldest friends, the table cloth, lay sheltered until he should see whether the madman was come again.

Lord de Creci entered the room, and for a moment looked angrily at the body, supposing that Hastings had fallen asleep upon the sofa, and rather inclined to resent the liberty,—his eye however fell upon some spots of blood upon the uncarpeted floor, and the next instant he became aware of a round bald head, somewhat from its peculiar position resembling that of an otter, which peered out at him from beneath the table cloth, and the almost incredible idea entered his head, that Mr. Marsden was the murderer.

“Is he gone?” asked the head.

“Who?” demanded the Earl.

“The madman.”

“Ha,” said Lord de Creci, “what is it?—come out.”

“Horton,” whined Mr. Marsden, evolving himself from the table-cloth; “he has escaped, he tried to kill me, but I beat him off, and then he killed that unfortunate smuggler.”

“I do not know that he is a smuggler,” said Lord de Creci; “but he is clearly dead, it must have been the murderer we saw; where has he escaped from?”

“Bedlam,” succinctly and collectively returned Mr. Marsden, now once more on his feet; “I’ll tell you a story about him as long as your arm, but see and secure him first, for heaven’s sake; he’ll be prowling about the country like a wild cat.”

“True,” returned Lord de Creci, and left the room.

In a few minutes, all steps were taken to capture the murderer; the boat’s crew were called, the neighbouring cottagers were alarmed, the gates secured, and the search commenced. Lord de Creci, however, certain that the cause of the disturbance among the owls was now explained, proceeded at once to the ruin, and there saw again the same figure perched upon the top, and evidently aware that he was the object of pursuit, for he shook his hand fiercely at the crowd that soon swarmed round the foot of the tower, muttering defiance to them, and now and then breaking out into a hideous howl, that was almost immediately taken up and repeated by the chorus of owls that still wheeled, and flitted, and whooped about him, as if calling on him to come forth and trust the air like one of them. But how to secure him was the difficulty. The interior of the building was completely empty, it had been a mere shell for centuries; he must have clambered up

inside by the help of the gnarled trunks of ivy, a difficult and dangerous ladder; and even if the way up was easy, who was to commit himself in a personal combat, at the top of a tower two hundred feet and more above the rocks beneath, with a murderous madman. He still had the knife with him, dripping yet with the blood of his last victim, or even failing that, what was to prevent his seizing his pursuer, and springing off to be dashed to pieces on the rocks beneath—Nothing.

The question was soon solved; Lord de Creci felt that if rank had honour, place, and precedence, it has also leadership, and is bound to assume its duties where occasion requires it. A ladder was brought and closely followed by O'Driscoll, who, acting on the well known proverb, "that a ready hand never lacks weapons," had armed himself with a most ferocious looking spade,—the Earl began to mount. The side on which they ascended, was that where the castle wall joined the tower, so that a certain degree of stability was thus attained for the ladder. On the other was the madman, crouching and watching their progress, like a wild beast tracked to his lair; two hundred feet below him, broke the waves among the rocks. When the two were half way up, two of the boat's crew reached the castle, and attempted also to mount to support them, but the ladder seemed hardly strong enough to bear their weight, and the Earl ordered them down again. With the most intense anxiety, the bystanders watched their dangerous progress; every step they made seemed to increase the general regret that they had attempted it at all. The owls still kept fluttering and whooping, like birds of ill omen exulting in the catastrophe at hand; but onwards still they went,—at last they reached the summit of the wall; Lord de Creci stood upon the top. O'Driscoll joined him, and they moved towards their object, the madman now sprung to his feet raised his arms wildly above his head, and advanced in a fearful silence towards Lord de Creci. Suddenly he paused, looked for a moment at the knife that all this time he held in his hand, and flung it up in the air. As he watched it in its course, rise, decline, and fall, glitter and gleaming in the moonlight, the Earl, hoping he could have cured him, pressed rapidly forwards,—his hand almost reached! but the doom was gone forth,—he might not be saved; the knife had so recently shed blood, seemed a magnet to draw the murderer after it with a hideous attraction, for it had not touched the ground before springing with a wild cry from the summit of the tower, Sir T. Horton followed.

There was a pause of stifled breath and creeping flesh—strong felt themselves shrinking into skeletons,—felt new pains coursing in unknown nerves;—there was a fearful rustling as the body against the rocks in its descent—a sudden splash mingling with deadened sound as the unhappy maniac fell heavily upon the rocks below,—a faint moaning as if clay and spirit were bidding one another farewell—and the silence that broods over death.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Nor long did that dread silence endure, as the sound of the falling body died away, and the succeeding wave rippled back to the sea, like that which had gone before it, but no sound of life more came from below, the spell broke, tongues were loosed, and a startled clamour arose as all who had witnessed the catastrophe hurried madly to the beach, shuddering and panting, jostling and pushing one another, as they rushed to the spot where lay the maniac. In spite of the distance which he had fallen, nearly two hundred feet of sheer descent, there was still some life in him, not much. He still indeed breathed, still muttered to himself, still appeared in some degree sensible; but it was clear that it was not for long, the sand was running fast and surely, there were but a few grains left; no man could look at that trunk, maimed, crushed, and bruised as it was, and imagine that the principle of life could long exist in it. However, he was carried as gently as possible up the steep ascent, and the first token of consciousness, or more properly, volition, that he gave, was in passing the door of the sitting room where lay the body of his victim, yet warm, but slowly settling into the cold of pulseless blood—the ice that thaws but with the morning of the judgment. Here an uneasy motion of dissent indicated that he, at all events, *now* retained reason enough, feeling enough, conscience enough, to shrink from such a meeting of the dying with the dead, him about to pass that dark gate, with him whom he had sent before him; and he was carried up stairs to a room, where, laid on the bed whence *he* was to rise no more, he awaited in dead silence, though not absolutely stupefaction, the arrival of the village surgeon, and the Rev. Mr. Marsden,—for both of whom a messenger had been despatched the moment something like order was restored in the castle.

The surgeon was the first to appear; a single glance was enough for him, and an expressive jerk of the head conveyed *his* opinion to the bystanders—compound fractures of both thighs—two or three crushed ribs—and the indications of severe internal injuries—he that runs may read what is written in such clear grim characters as these. The office of the surgeon was at an end—it was the priest's turn now—then the sexton's. The sufferer, indeed, might linger on a few hours, but the hours might be numbered on a man's fingers—he might lighten up a few minutes before death; sometimes a ray of eternal light will gleam upon the long darkened intellect, and spirit a feeble flame out of it as it is quenched for ever—or he might pass from stupor to nothingness, and give no sign; no man could either tell, stay, or help.

Mr. William Marsden soon afterwards arrived, but as yet his presence was of little use. Sir Thomas had given no sign of the restoration

of his faculties; he lay still, indeed, he could not help that, for he had no power of moving; his eyes sometimes rolled wildly about, and sometimes seemed to exhibit some faint, hardly perceptible traces of an imperfect intelligence, but still he spoke not; and after a fruitless effort to attract his attention, the reverend gentleman returned to the sitting room, whence the corpse had been removed at the express request of Mr. Montague Marsden, who, without arriving at his conclusion by any thing like a laborious train of reasoning, had an intuitive perception that dinner could not be reconciled with the presence of a corpse, and who now, remarking that their party was assembled, and that the usual dinner time was long passed, proposed having it served directly, adding, that he had a great deal to tell Lord de Creci; as if there were in his mind some undefinable connection between dinner and business, as is indeed by no means rare in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, where men of business are apt to think it necessary to balance the discharging a load of duties, by taking in a freight of provisions. There was no particular reason for refusing the poor man his wish, his Lordship assented, and their cheerless repast commenced.

Its gloomy character was, if not absolutely enlivened, at least rendered less oppressive by Mr. Montague Marsden's account, somewhat confused, it is true, of the strange adventure in which Clara had been involved; and the something worse than suspicion that had thereby become attached to her name—of Sir Thomas's madness the very day after her recovery from apparent death—of his attempt to strangle Lady Sarah,—of his consignment to a lunatic asylum,—his escape from it at a time that he was supposed to be almost cured;—of his mysterious appearance at Falconscrag, which Mr. Marsden could by no means explain or understand, for he was ignorant of the circumstance of Harry's having concealed him in the secret chamber; of his attempt to murder him; his own gallant resistance; the sudden diversion Hastings's appearance caused,—for he made no mention of his own adroit application of the ram struggling in the thicket,—and finally of the sad catastrophe.

"He never would have been quiet if he had lived," said he in conclusion, adverting to the poor wretch's suicide. "It is a blessed release."

"Perhaps it is," said Lord de Creci, who thought he meant a release for the maniac.

"It is the will of heaven," gravely remarked Mr. William Marsden, for he knew that he meant a release for himself.

"The Lord's will be done," piously rejoined Mr. Montague Marsden, as the second course was placed upon the table.

"If you please Sir, Sir Thomas is gettin' middlin' sensible now, he wants to spake to you," said Jerry, as he entered with the dishes.

"With me, what again? what can he want?" exclaimed Mr. Marsden, in some precipitation, "say I'm particularly engaged," and he seized a spoon, as if to prove that he really was occupied.

"No, Sir, with the minister," replied Jerry, as Mr. William Marsden rose to visit the dying man.

"Oh, yes, that is another thing," said Mr. Montague Marsden, "but he can wait till you've done dinner, William."

"I don't think he *can* wait, Sir," said Jerry, who had seen enough of violent deaths to know that the unhappy man's sand was well nigh run, and the significance with which he said these few words was not lost upon the worthy divine, who instantly hurried up stairs to the chamber of the dying. He found Sir Thomas, evidently fast sinking, his speech feeble, his extremities already cold, the seal of death clearly affixed to his perishing form; but still once more in full possession of his faculties, and for nearly an hour the two joined earnestly in prayer.

He left Lord de Creci absorbed in grave meditation, such as that night's tragedy would naturally suggest. Of his uncle, Lord Thomas, whose death occurred about the time of his own birth, he had of course no recollection personally, but the sad story was familiar to him, and it seemed a strange fatality that hung over the father and son; the stormy life, the untimely death, each by their own hand too; where were the advantages which this world gave?—birth,—rank,—station,—fortune,—broken, shivered, and scattered, like a globe of glass: Lord de Creci, too, had his sorrows,—rank or life had been of little value to him. Mr. Montague Marsden, in the mean time, had succeeded in dining to his own entire satisfaction, and had become perfectly resigned, like a good Christian as he was, to the fate of the two fellow-creatures whom that dark evening had hurried through the misty chasm of eternity, *that* he could bear the more easily, for the reflection that they were at rest, so was he, in the enjoyment of the repose of repletion, and that too unclogged by the horrors of indigestion; sublunary enjoyment it however was, and therefore not quite unqualified, "*totus teres atque rotundus*," as he was; a perfect form in perfect rest is not to be found in ordinary life, it exists only in the imagination of neckclothless poets; and it was too true, that he had some unpleasant visions of a coroner's inquest, and the difficulty he expected to find in reconciling the reputation for a desperate resistance, he proposed acquiring for himself, by his account of the death of Hastings; with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as required to be told by his oath. This, however, was a consideration to be postponed till the next day, sufficient for the day was the evil thereof; more than sufficient in Mr. Marsden's opinion, so he tempered and qualified it with port wine till it became a very tolerable and endurable burden; a process somewhat analogous to the boiling of the peas in the pilgrim's shoes. The dinner, too, notwithstanding its extemporaneous character, had been unusually good; and in short Mr. Marsden had almost eaten himself to sleep, when a summons arrived for Lord de Creci to attend the death-bed of Sir Thomas.

"I hope to heaven he won't want me next," muttered Mr. Marsden, gazing after the retiring form of the Earl, as if another safeguard had been ruthlessly removed from between him and the dreaded maniac; "it's very strange, Sir Thomas never appears without doing some mischief, or raising some disturbance, just like a great blundering school-boy; what on earth can such people be sent into the world for;—to be sure his father must have gone mad before him, or he would not have

poisoned himself, and his mother is queer enough; no wonder she made a false start, a faux pas, as Maria would call it. I do think there's something queer in the Fitzwarine blood—Lord de Creci is strange creature enough, and to spare—Lord William is as wild as a young guinea fowl—the Marquis is steady certainly, he took his seat in the House of Peers soon after he came of age; but his brother, poor Lord Thomas that's dead and gone—ahem—where his son's following there was no holding him, and I do not know but there is a little spirit of the devil in Lady Sarah—Lady Madelaine, she's a good creature never breathed, there never was a better; but that lover of hers was a fiend incarnate, though she did not know that; and his grandfather, the Marquis's uncle that took the name of Eversfield, he would have been hanged for the forty-five, if it had not been for the family interest, indeed that would not have saved him, if he had not arrived at Derby the day after the wild Highlanders bolted—it's a strange thing, if queer-ness once gets into a family it never gets out again. Thank heaven there's none of it in ours."

In such a strain mused the reflective Montague in the dining room; in the servants' hall sat the worthy O'Driscoll, holding forth eloquently on the subject of the habits of the Holy Land, the attack of Arab cavalry—the defence by Christian fire-arms, and the incredible scarcity of any thing to drink, making up for lost time out of a tumbler of gin and water that stood by his side. He was sitting at his ease before the fire, one hand held a 'dudeen,' the other—ahem—housemaids ought not to be allowed to have waists, but he was tolerably comfortable, almost as much so as the moralising Montague who sat dreamily above, sipping port and cracking walnuts; upon which subject, being in a benignant humour, on account of his recent escape, he then and there remarked, in a sort of self-satisfied undergrowth, such as one might suppose to come from a gorged bear sucking his own paws for pleasure, that it was a very able arrangement of Providence that gave us so much trouble in peeling them, inasmuch as it prevented our eating them with a dangerous rapidity, thereby protecting us in some measure from any very sudden catastrophe from repletion, and thereupon he stirred the fire and filled his glass;—in an adjoining room lay the newly dead, above, the dying,—for the suicide's very minutes were numbered:—truly it is a coat of many colours that this world weaves for the immortal spirits that doze and dream awhile in it and then pass on.

Lord de Creci, in ascending to receive the last words of his dying relative, was met at the door of the room where he lay, by Mr. William Marsden. The reverend gentleman held a paper in his hand which had been apparently committed to his care by Sir Thomas, probably his will, and seemed deeply agitated.

"It is a terrible scene," said he, "but I trust that mercy may yet be extended to the penitent sinner. He knew not what he did. He insists upon seeing you alone, Lord de Creci," continued he; "there is something that weighs heavy on his heart, and he says he cannot die in peace till he has seen you. I shall wait in the next room."

"Is his mind restored," asked Lord de Creci, in a low husky whisper, for he, calm and stern as he commonly was, could not have looked un-

moved on the last struggle of the parting soul, passing in unconsciousness to its account.

"Perfectly," returned the clergyman, "he is now in full possession of his senses; but it is not for long, it is the gleam of the lamp before it extinguishes for ever; he is dying, hear what he has to say as quick as possible, and call me—I should not wish to be away—*then*."

With a silent gesture of assent Lord de Creci entered the chamber where Sir Thomas lay stretched upon the bed, the sweat of death already upon his clammy brow, an expression of lassitude overspreading his features as if he were weary of the world he was leaving, a constant spasmodic snapping at the sheet that covered his crushed and mangled limbs, and his glance, at times wavering and uncertain, as if disturbed by objects dancing around him. He seemed to have an unquiet consciousness of Lord de Creci's presence, for when he entered, he turned away his face, and for some minutes would not look in that direction at all, but kept his eyes fixed on the wall. At last he stole a side-long glance towards him, but withdrew his gaze directly, as if there was something that gave him pain in the very sight of the Earl, who supposing that he wished to give some directions about the disposition of his property; and, indeed, at the moment entirely forgetting that Sir Thomas was ignorant of the near relationship that existed between them, waited patiently till he should speak.

Still for a time he was silent. Something he manifestly had to say; but that, whatever it might be, he clearly shrunk from saying, and it was with no little anxiety that the Earl saw minute after minute slip away without the desired communication, and reflected that the minutes that remained were very few indeed. The indistinct mutterings of the dying man, too, occasioned much uneasiness to him who watched that sad scene; for whilst it was evident that there was something to be told, it was also apparent that a wandering of mind was coming on that might deprive all that he might say of weight or credit; and now another cause threw a darker shade of horror over that death-bed. Perhaps the long disordered brain was not perfectly restored to sanity; perhaps, to the suddenly stricken man, in rude bodily health, death, violent death, coming like the swoop of an eagle, to bear him away in its talons from the earth, rends and tears with a more hideous wrench, than when the merciful enfeeblement of disease, creeping along, step by step, over the failing frame, has already weakened and loosened the bands that bind the spirit to the clay; perhaps the half instinctive terrors of infancy, the first recognition of a superior and unknown power, that dimly lights the mind of childhood, revived, as his spirit prepared to quit the earth for the universe. Whatever the cause might be, there was that which oppressed the dying man with a ghastly burden.

"What brings *him* here," murmured he, looking with an expression of deep anxiety into a distant corner of the room, which his imagination seemed to people with some phantasm of gloom; "why does he come here *now*? Is he come for me?" and Lord de Creci shuddered as he thought of the horrible forebodings that might even then be assuming grim forms in the shattered mind of him who was just passing from an ill-spent life.

'If men would but live as if they were once to die,' thought he ; but the change that even then was taking place in the countenance of the dying man, recalled him to the necessity of doing something before it should be too late ; there was no time for reflection then, but a few minutes—a few seconds—the record would be closed, the voice quenched—the sinner alone—with God.

"Let me know your wishes, my dear Sir Thomas," said he, sitting down by the bed-side, and taking his hand in his, which, however, the other instantly withdrew ; "you may rely upon their being attended in every respect." Sir Thomas started as if a serpent had stung him ; "I see that something weighs heavy upon your mind," continued the other, "rely upon me, communicate it to me, and I promise you whatever you desire shall be done ; if it be anything that you do wish to have known, be assured that with me you may depend upon the most profound secrecy ; only tell me what it is ; lose no time—anything you wish shall be done."

Sir Thomas made no answer to this ; he looked vacantly at the ceiling, and more than once the Earl observed a nervous compression of his lips, as if he were endeavouring to muster up energy, and put unwillingly formed resolution into execution ; and yet, even when it came to the point, shrunk from the effort. At last he sat suddenly almost fiercely up in the bed, and a strange light gleamed in his eyes as he glared upon Lord de Creci ; he wrung his hand with a convulsive grasp.

"Hear me," he said, "hear me, and then curse me."

The Earl heard him, but, alas ! though strange gurgling sounds passed his lips, the power of articulation was gone, the confused medley of broken and unintelligible babble was all that remained of the human voice, the light faded away from his eyes as the faint delusive semblance of strength that the last struggling pulsation of his failing heart had flung over his frame died away ; his grasp of Lord de Creci's hand tightened convulsively for a moment,—quivered, and relaxed ; there was a gasping, a fixing of the eye, a change in the countenance, dropping of the jaw, but no ejaculated prayer, not even the ghastly token of an unfinished sentence marked the moment that the unhappy man rendered up his soul to his Creator.



Le grand maître de la maison de France

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LIST

CHAPTER XLVII.

How fast spread the grim tidings of murder, tidings that all are as eager to listen to as to relate; how they pass from mouth to mouth, swelling and gathering in their progress, moving all minds, yet with a not displeasing emotion, ruffling the smooth surface of society, like a stone flung into a calm lake, that raises a system of circles whose waves increase in volume as they increase their distance from their common centre, till they have spread over all within reach, and melted out of sight in the distance;—rapidly spread rumour in this instance, but not regularly, not like the dimples produced by one stone, but like the irregular network of circles that is caused by the flinging a whole handful of pebbles upon the smooth water, whose undulations cross, perplex, and interweave with one another in a crystal network; for the second death gave an inextricable confusion to the narrative, which passed from one to another, in the neighbourhood of Falconscrag; some said that two madmen had set upon Mr. Marsden and murdered him, others that Mr. Marsden had slain two madmen with his own hand; some said Sir Thomas Horton had killed another madman with Mr. Marsden, and others that he and Mr. Marsden had killed a pirate between them, or a smuggler at the least; and, as soon as the name of the sufferer became known, public opinion at once identified him with the father of Clara, and the village of Somerton began to rejoice in the conviction that the long lost husband of Mrs. Hastings, that had puzzled them so much, had landed that evening from the Arab, and that the mystery was about to be cleared up,—the circumstance of his not having survived his reappearance many hours, adding of course a more pleasing interest to the tale, and making the teller more vain-glorious, whilst narrating it, and the hearer more attentive, and more desirous of an opportunity of repeating it.

Nothing facilitates the arrival at a conclusion so much as the being divested of the encumbrance of premises, and Somerton, (or as it was spelt in the earlier records of that county, 'Somertonne,') in this instance, was much fortified in this view of the case by the note which Mr. Montague Marsden had sent to his sister, and which, having towards tea-time acquired considerable circulation in the village, we may, without incurring the risk of being charged with a breach of confidence, lay before our readers.

"DEAR MARIA,

"Horton has escaped, and broken his neck, and killed the late Mr. Hastings, and tried to murder me; thank Heaven! Don't wait dinner; they have a fine turkey here; he cut my coat and waistcoat, &c. &c. X
M. M."

There was in this note some little deficiency of lucid arrangement, it is true; but, after all, the want of connection and due order was not

greater than in the best regulated Cyclopædia ; the facts were there, scattered and disjointed, but only requiring to be put into their proper place to form a complete picture of the evening's events ; and, after a short mental exertion, Miss Maria Marsden succeeded in the requisite classification to her own entire dissatisfaction ; for it is to be observed that she still clung to a sort of phantom lien she considered she had upon Sir Thomas, which, fabricated by her own imagination, could only be dissolved by the same agency. Sir Thomas was gone now. The blow was broken by his previous madness, which had sobered and chastened her hopes, and turned her silvery visions, hot-pressed and wire-wove as they were, into little better than a sort of whitey-brown reverie. She derived much comfort of a negative character also from the reflection that she was not the only sufferer ; and fortified herself with the strange but not uncommon consolation that the murder of Hastings left another not much better off than herself, and having taken time, and a gentle stomachic, to collect her thoughts, (the latter restorative she called a cordial, but any custom-house officer would have demanded twenty-two shillings and sixpence per gallon duty to the crown upon it,) she discovered that, seeing that it was clearly below her dignity to discuss the exciting details of a murder with her housekeeper, whilst at the same time she was in urgent want of the sympathy of an enlightened mind, the best thing that she could do was to visit Mrs. Hastings, that they might bewail together the common calamity that had befallen them.

She found Mrs. Hastings really somewhat startled by the rumour that had already reached her, fearful of discrediting it, yet unwilling to believe it, trembling lest inquiry might confirm it, yet not without that burning thirst of suspense, the searing desire that longs yet dreads to know the worst, irresolute from over-anxiety, bewildered by the necessity of deciding herself, and in short exactly in that state of mind that led her to defer at once to any one who would decide for her, and to adopt at once the view that Mr. Marsden's note led his sister to take of the identity of the murdered man with her late husband. However this very state of mind made her visitor's presence intolerable to her ; and scarcely had she read the note, before she rose, and without saying one single word, retired from the room, and in a few minutes a maid came to inform Miss Marsden that Mrs. Hastings did not feel herself well enough to see her again that evening.

This was by no means the sort of thing that Miss Marsden intended ; she had come there to enact resignation in the most impressive manner ; she had expected to have exhorted Mrs. Hastings to bear up against her loss like a Christian, and to have been exhorted to the like effect by the poor widow in return ; she had mirrored herself to herself, the personification of Christian charity, assuring Mrs. Hastings of her entire forgiveness both of her and Clara for having driven Sir Thomas mad, and meekly and modestly receiving the respectful expressions of admiration that such unheard of generosity must as a matter of course call forth,—at least if the widow was at all deserving of it. She had proposed to herself promising in her brother's name, for she was not without her good points, that the funeral should be carefully attended

to and performed at his expense ; so that the slender stock of the poor widow should suffer no further diminution, and had intended to be duly thanked and lauded for this really Christian care for the friendless ; but she had by no means intended to be left in the bare sitting-room, with two corded trunks, a butcher's bill, some manuscript music, and a work-basket, and then civilly shewn out by a maid servant in curl papers. Such was, however, her destiny, and as the servant shut the door after her so may we, — her sham sensations and artificial sensibility, theatrical sorrow and imaginary affection, need trouble us no longer ; we have to do with other beings and other feelings, for to Mrs. Hastings we must return. She had still a sore trial before her, for it was not sufficient that rumour should point out the recently murdered stranger as her husband, it was necessary that she should see the body and ascertain to a certainty that it was he in truth, for the mere similarity of name really *proved* nothing.

"We must go to Falconscrag now," said she to Clara. "Merciful powers ! on what an errand."

"I cannot go, mother," murmured Clara faintly.

"True, I forgot," returned the elder lady ; "would it were spared me. Clara, the very idea of seeing *him* dead, recalls to my mind, more vividly than you can imagine, the recollection of the distant days when he and I seemed entering together upon an earthly paradise ; when we thought that we were all-sufficient for one another, and desired no other heaven save joint eternity."

Clara hid her face in her hand. Some such feelings had place, too, in her breast, they too were rudely crushed ; but she instantly raised her head, for her mother had now approached so near to the long-forbidden subject of her father, and she listened eagerly in the hopes that some revelation was at hand. She seemed to herself as if she had an intuitive feeling that that night was destined to clear up the puzzle of a life.

"I remember as well as if it were yesterday," continued Mrs. Hastings, "when we first were married, how we roamed along the shores of the Mediterranean, and thought that all life was to be a summer sea, like that on which we sailed, and never dreamed of storms and wrecks. Yet even then I sometimes had a dark foreboding, for there was one thing that did prevent my happiness being complete ; I often strove against the feeling and tried to reason myself out of it, but in vain, still it oppressed me, and it was this, my husband had secrets from me, there was a mystery about his family that he never would disclose. He said that it was necessary ; talked of dependance, of unreasonable relatives, of poverty, of I know not what, but all would yet be well. I felt I ought to conclude that he knew best, but I was often uneasy about it. Still we were happy beyond any ideas of happiness I had ever formed, and this one dark spot seemed but a passing cloud. I little thought then that it was as the image of the cloud that seems to come up out of the sea, no bigger than a man's hand, but so it was. Poor Hugo ! I can see him now, his high, thoughtful, noble, gentle expression of countenance. Do you know, Clara, it seems strange, but no man ever really reminded me of your poor father except

that terrible Sir Thomas, who, I may now tell you, was also an admirer of mine,—a heartless villain,—but still there was a strong personal likeness, so much so that I never could think of him without the idea of a fallen angel coming into my mind.”

“For heaven’s sake do not speak of him,” said Clara, with an involuntary shudder. “I never can think of him with the feelings that a Christian ought to have.”

“It is now nearly twenty years,” said Mrs. Hastings, “since we were married, and we enjoyed life only as two who loved as we did can enjoy it, roaming about the Mediterranean, we visited the isles of Greece, the wondrous land of Egypt, the ruins of Sicily, over which nature seems to smile in its flowers and trees, and we even landed in Italy; but I certainly did observe that my husband avoided most carefully all contact with his own countrymen. However, he was all kindness to me,—that was my world, and world enough it was for me; but still it was with no slight feelings of exultation and pleasure that at last I heard the welcome tidings that we were to return to England.

“We embarked,” here Mrs. Hastings paused for a moment, and then rose. “I cannot tell you now,” said she, “when I have gone through this last trial I may, perhaps, have more strength. I may be able to describe the terrible scene in which we parted. I cannot now; if I did I should never have strength to reach Falconsrag, and that must be done, and done at once;”—and she rose immediately, commenced such preparations for encountering the inclemency of that wintry night as her slender wardrobe afforded. They were soon completed, and she set forth on her way, leaving Clara alone in the cottage.

How thought disports itself in utter solitude. The place that is unshared by another is a world of our own; we people the silent realm with voiceless shadows, some bright, some dark, some to smile at, and some to laugh at, some that belong to times long passed, and some that may belong to times soon to arrive, some that it is utterly impossible should be realised, and some also that must certainly come to pass, for many a waking dream is but the foreshadowing of the approaching reality, and many—how many—in the midst of all their seeming wildness and hopelessness, baseless and unsubstantial as they appear, are deeply and surely laying the foundations of their own fulfilment. In Clara’s dreams, however, there was but little of hope,—all on the earth was to her gloom, joylessness, foreboding. That the murdered stranger should really turn out to be her father, could in no way be other than an evil to her. Certainly, it would remove the veil from a dark mystery, that had embittered her mother’s existence, but even, in so doing, it would tear open old wounds,—would the bleeding afresh heal them. The very delay that such a discovery must occasion would be a source of the most intense suffering to her; for heroically as she had made up her mind to sacrifice her love for Harry to her resolution not to involve him in her own disgrace, she dreaded the being in his neighbourhood, it kept alive feelings that ought to be smothered; she felt that, once parted from him by the ocean, she could nerve her mind to the task of forgetting him; but his presence,

within a few miles, made that impossible ;—it was like the sitting in the very room that held the treasure of her heart, parted only from the loved one—by the coffin's lid.

Nor was this all. She had always nourished in secret a sort of dream that Sir Thomas's heart would some day reproach him with the cruelty of which he had been guilty towards her, and that, in a moment of human sympathy, he would relent and do tardy justice to the poor orphan whom he had so unaccountably persecuted. She had sometimes pictured to herself the once maniac restored in mind, grateful for the mental health once more given him, at peace with mankind, softened in spirit, confessing his crime, and receiving her ready forgiveness ; and then,—but this might not be, even though she sometimes fancied that his sudden unexpected appearance at Falconscrag had something to do with some project of his of this nature ; still, death had now closed his lips, and whence was the discovery of her innocence to come.

Sometimes she pictured to herself the gipsey confessing her share in the transaction, but who was to trace a wandering gipsey ; thence her visions roamed again to other less probable means of solving the mystery ; and at last she took up a piece of the music that lay on the table, and which she had recently copied out from a manuscript lent her by one of her former pupils, and derived a melancholy pleasure from reading again and again the words of gentle fidelity it contained.

She was roused from this employment by the arrival of a messenger from the Arab, who brought her a scroll of a very different character. It was a letter from Harry, and poor Clara almost shuddered as she read it, so fierce and angry was the language in which it was couched, so almost savage was the tone in which it expressed the writer's conviction that the reason she assigned for refusing to fulfil her promise to him was not the true one ; reproached her with fickleness, almost with falsehood,—announced his intention of immediately leaving England, and finally bade her an eternal farewell. A momentary flush of anger reddened her cheek, a cloud passed over her brow, but soon faded away into a melancholy expression of hopelessness and depression, for a dark sense of injustice lay heavy on her heart as she read this ; she felt that she did not deserve it ; she felt that, right or wrong, she had stifled the pleadings of passion in her own breast, to listen to the voice of conscience, and yet still she had an indistinct idea floating in her mind, that with all his warmth, he was not so *very* much to blame as he might have appeared ; and, discourteous, unkind, and unjust as the letter was, she forgave it. Perhaps she even thought how sweet mutual forgiveness might be. She laid down the letter, and some tear-drops welled from her eyes, but there was no anger more in her mind.

Time wore on, in gloom and solitude, late into the night ; long hours had passed since Mrs. Hastings had set out on her way to Falconscrag, and still she did not return. Clara sent the tired maid to bed, intending to sit up herself and let in her mother ; more than once the idea of proceeding to Falconscrag, to ascertain the cause of the delay, occurred to her

mind, but then, the meeting Harry there,—she *could* not go,—yet what could have happened? Was it really her father that her mother had gone out to meet thus.* It was a weary time. She began to feel very uneasy; hour after hour pealed heavily from the village steeple, when suddenly the silence of midnight was broken by a low whispering outside; now, for a moment, Clara was really frightened. She could not recognize the voices, though she could plainly hear two, but among these her mother's was not audible. The first knocking at the door not being answered, a second, louder still, succeeded; and hearing her name pronounced by a voice which she took to be that of Mr. William Marsden, she proceeded to the door, little dreaming what she was to encounter.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

WE must now return to Mrs. Hastings, whom we left on her dreary way to Falconscrag, hardly knowing whether she was not to find there a dead husband. Wrapped up in her own reflections, she passed on, heeding nothing and finding her way more mechanically than by any process of observation, till she reached the corner where Harry had first caught the sight of the Arab at her moorings, that had suggested to him the idea of returning to the East with Lord de Creci. There she lay still, and she attracted Mrs. Hastings's notice too; a light was burning on board, and a light on the sea has ever a singular property of drawing all eyes towards it; it seems as if fire was trespassing on the domains of a sister element, or as if air had flung a star upon the sea, that gleamed redder in the thick atmosphere of the earth than on its own blue home; and so it was, that even in the fulness of her heart, and the preoccupation of her thoughts, Mrs. Hastings looked earnestly at the vessel, and it became the object of an unaccountable interest to her. She, too, was acquainted with the East, she had seen the land whence that graceful bark had just returned, and in addition to the holy interest that belongs to those shores, and will belong through all ages, she had one of a livelier character in them, for the East was full of memory for her, and the past lived again in her mind as she looked at the ship that had so recently floated in those seas. In that ship had returned the man who might be found to be her long-lost husband—in that ship Harry, whom, had it been possible, she would have most joyfully welcomed as a son-in-law, had sailed an infidel and had returned a believer; even the dark but not stern owner of that vessel had now become an object of curiosity, if not of interest to her, for she had been much impressed with the universal confidence that he seemed to inspire, and she had some confused hope that he might search out the truth and clear her daughter's character; and she stood still for a moment and gazed upon the Arab, anxious, if for ever so short a time, to divert her thoughts from the trial she was about to undergo.

Suddenly another light appeared. There was nothing extraordinary in this, for in fact the vessel being the scene of much bustle, there were many lights burning on board, but this casual appearance of the second light had an indescribable effect upon her. Without actually yielding to superstitious feelings, she certainly did experience a sense of cheerfulness, as if it were a good omen,—to such vague speculations we are ever prone, in matters over which we ourselves have, and can have, no controul whatever; and Mrs. Hastings assuredly felt her mind more at ease, and better fitted to encounter weal or woe as the case might be—when her not unpleasing reverie terminated, and she passed rapidly onwards. It seemed almost as if she had been expected at Falconsrag, for O'Driscoll was standing at the gate, as if he were waiting for her; but the same half superstitious state of mind that had caused her to feel elation at the appearance of the two lights on board the Arab, left her equally susceptible of impressions of augury, whether for good or evil, and she shuddered as she entered, for she was greeted by an ill-omened sound; the owls disturbed, and not yet settled again, kept fluttering about the buildings, and it was amid their whoopings, sounding in her ears like aerial voices floating about the dying, that Mrs. Hastings entered Falconsrag.

Nor did the human inhabitants of the castle seem easier in their minds than the fowls of night; there was an indescribable anxiety in the countenances of all, that gave place to an expression of almost painful curiosity, as they bent eager and inquiring looks upon her; some mystery attached to her late husband manifestly revived in the breasts of all, and the impression that he, the long lost one had returned only to be hurried to his grave, was universal; her own mind was in a state of the utmost confusion, she could hardly support herself as she ascended the stairs; and it was with mutual embarrassment that she was ushered into the presence of Mr. Montague Marsden, who received her; for both his brother and Lord de Creci were occupied with the unhappy Sir Thomas. For a moment Mrs. Hastings could not find words to express the object of her visit; she sat down in silence, and almost hoped that Mr. Marsden would anticipate her, and save her the pain of informing him directly of her business; this, however, that gentleman was by no means inclined to do; and after a short pause she came to the point at once, and informed him that she had heard of the murder of a person of the name of Hastings, and that she had particular reasons for wishing to see the body. Mr. Marsden, who was not without his suspicions as to the nature of these reasons, offered no objections, and observing that her feelings would probably be much affected by the sight of a corpse, whatever it might be, pressed her to fortify herself with a glass of wine, enforcing his precept by example; but the lady having declined this internal armour, without further delay he ushered her into the chamber where lay the corpse, to which the sheet that had been hastily thrown over it, shewing the indistinct outline of the dead beneath, gave an aspect of solemn impressiveness, far more than it could have possessed had it been exposed.

“Singular taste women have for excitement—I never could understand it; it is bad enough as it is, that ‘Man is born to trouble

as the sparks fly upwards," said Mr. Marsden, in a reflective manner ; though whether the latter part of his observation, undoubtedly true in itself, was intended as a dirge over the deceased, a mild reflection on the subject of his own trials, or in the way of consolation to Mrs. Hastings, it would be difficult for us to say, seeing that he probably did not know himself. "The paths of glory lead but to the grave, we come into the world,"—here he paused, and glancing for a moment at Mrs. Hastings, who had sat down with her face hidden in her hands, for she was almost overcome with emotion, seemed to consider within himself whether what he was going to say was quite correct, and apparently decided in the negative, for he closed his moral reflections with the sweeping one, '*mors omnia vincit*,' and proceeded to draw aside the sheet. As he did so, a new light broke in upon him.

The features of the murdered man had already subsided from the agitation of dying to the repose of death ; many of the harsher furrows were even now obliterated, the gathering of the eyelid that marked the fierce wariness of the moody seaman was gone, there was no scowl on the brow now, no distension of passion in the nostril, neither sneer nor callousness in the lips ; it seemed as if the hand of mercy had smoothed away the stamp of the earth's sinfulness, when the book of the earth's life had closed, and the sinner could offend no more; the calm expression of untroubled youth reappeared, the gentleness and the kindliness, the softer traits by which the likeness between brother and sister is to be traced were there, it was as if clay was to return to the bosom of its mother, unstained by guilt, unscathed by the fierce ordeal that it had undergone whilst entwined with spirit; but Mr. Marsden thought of none of these things, little observant as he commonly was, there was something now that awakened his attention, and his frame trembled with emotion as he cast a bewildered look upon the body.

"I know that face, surely," said he, "he is no smuggler, who can it be;"—and at that moment he became aware of a black ribbon round the neck of the dead, and drawing it out, at once recognised the portrait that was attached to it.

"Mercy on us, so here is the mystery cleared up, I thought I had seen him before, now I know him well enough," said he, turning towards Mrs. Hastings, with the picture in his hand. "Good heaven, how he is changed ; to be sure it is no wonder when one considers what a life he led—all excitement—no rest :"—and he mechanically surrendered the miniature to the trembling hands of Mrs. Hastings, who dared not trust herself to look upon the body, but expected to find in the portrait a confirmation or refutation of her fears or her doubts, to hope, alas ! she had been long a stranger. She started as she saw it ; what she sought she partly found, but before she had time to speak, Mr. William Marsden entered the room.

"My dear Mrs. Hastings," said he, with an expression of countenance in which something like exultation was strangely blended with the gravity that belonged to the solemn scene that was passing, "I have—"

"Look here, William," said his brother, pointing to the body, "look, do you know him ? do you know who this is ?"

"Was," suggested the clergyman gravely,—“no, I do not know him. Whose body do you suppose it to be?”

"It is the body of that unhappy young man that ruined himself at play three or four years ago, and ran away no one knew where," returned Mr. Montague Marsden: "you have heard of course of that wild young cousin of Lord Ellesmere's, Mr. Eversfield, who was so near being married to Lady Madelaine Fitzwarine, only he turned out badly,—here he lies."

"But I thought this poor man's name was Hastings," suggested the other.

"He called himself so," replied Mr. Montague Marsden; "I do not know why, unless, perhaps, you know his grandfather it was that took the name of Eversfield when he married, but he was a Fitzwarine himself,—Lord George, he was an uncle of the present Marquis, and you know the family are half mad about the part their ancestor took in the army of William the Conqueror. I wonder they do not christen all the children after the roll of Battle Abbey. However, I know that is he; see, here is Lady Madelaine's portrait, poor young lady, how will she bear the news?"

"And that reminds me, my dear madam," said the reverend gentleman, taking the portrait out of her hand, and gazing for an instant at the placid features of Lady Madelaine, "that Montague interrupted me in the joyful task that has devolved upon me, of being the bearer of good tidings to you. Even in the very moment of death, it pleased a merciful Providence to soften the heart of our unfortunate brother, that has just perished through the frightful agency of his mind turned against itself; and before his death he confessed fully, and freely, the imposture he practised with respect to your daughter; how he suborned a wandering gypsey, to persuade her under false pretences of secret information with respect to—I mean, about—that is to say,"—he paused here, unwilling to finish his sentence by alluding to her lost husband,—“to meet her at the house of a woman of infamous character, how he caused her to be surprised there, under circumstances that left little doubt on anybody's mind, as to her having been actuated in coming there by improper motives; how he poisoned Lady Ellesmere's mind against her by a long and insidious course of malignant insinuations, and sometimes even by direct falsehoods:—all these things when his faculties were mercifully restored to him in the hour of death, that he might not enter the presence of his Maker unrepentant, he acknowledged in penitence and shame; and in this paper reduced to writing, and signed by his own hand in my presence, you will find the full refutation of all the slander of which our poor Clara has been the unhappy victim."

With deep-felt joy, the mother took the paper from his hands; and certain now that she had not to undergo the trial of seeing the lifeless form of the lost, she looked hastily at the body that lay there in the stillness of death, but a troubled expression of doubt and surprise arose in her countenance, and her glance seemed rivetted to the stony face; for strange to say, she saw a strong likeness in it, to one of whom she hardly dared to think—she recognised in the features of the

to read odes about in his youth, Mrs. Brownrigg, the tricoteuses de l' Guillotine, Messalina, Jezebel, jumbled themselves up in a singular confusion in his brain with the Syrens and the Furies, little grey women that sat in graves, the Lady of the Kynast that set her lover tasks in which they must perish—(ah! thought he, she *was* a thorough woman,) the daughters of Lear, the spouse of Macbeth, the old lad recorded by Milton, that

"Seem'd woman to the waist and fair,
But ended foul in many a snaky fold,"

who met the fallen angel at a particular gate; female ghouls (if there are any) and various other equally flattering and authentic specimens of the sex. Certainly his thoughts at that moment would not have acquired him much renown at a small tea party; yet angry and disparaging as they were, it is questionable whether many of the fair sex would have not only forgiven but approved them, for they had on redeeming quality, and that was, he was in *earnest*; no dallying shifting, hesitating, coquetting, calculating or wavering, but right down regular earnest; betwixt earnestness and savageness in such matters there is often but one short step, and that step is over disappointment.

However, after a reasonable time, this began to clear away, his mind made a sort of attempt to recover its proper tone, but the return to a state of comparative calm brought him little relief. The more dispassionately he thought on the matter, the more he saw cause to admire the unswerving devotion to a high-souled conscientiousness that had governed Clara's conduct, and the undeviating sense of right by which she had always been guided, the more severely he felt the invaluable treasure that had been thus cruelly snatched from his grasp and the more bitterly he repented the unyielding temper which he formerly been his pride, and which he now felt was really the reason why she dreaded the effects upon his happiness, of an union with one despised and disparaged, and therefore would not marry him.

"Had I only been reasonable and accommodating like any one else," argued he, "she would not have imagined that I could have attached so much importance to some infernal lie, that some scoundrel or other has set going about her; still she ought to have given me credit for more stability of character than to imagine that I am to be turned from the purpose of years by a breath of air, a mere nothing. I shall not be so, I shall go ashore again, I will see her herself, she shall listen to reason." Whether Clara was likely to hear much reason out of his lips at that moment, or how far what he might say would accord with what he had written, is not very clear, a good deal of passion was probable; he took a turn in the cabin and of course knocked his head against the lamp, a circumstance not likely to add much to his good humour, and he shortly afterwards went on deck, and for upwards of an hour walked gloomily up and down the quarter-deck, which was now tolerably quiet, for the boats had all just pushed off together to take in their last load of water.

As he from time to time cast a glance at Falconsrag, he became aware that a greater number of lights were visible in the windows of the castle than he could account for; they were not stationary either, but shifted about from room to room, here and there, above and below

now they appeared in the court, and now glanced suddenly from the upper windows, it seemed as if a host of will-o'-th'-wisps, had stormed the castle and were disporting themselves through its apartments; and from the shore from time to time an indistinct sound would come fitfully over the water, a sound of human voices in haste and confusion, but what it meant he could not tell, nor had he for the present any means of ascertaining, for as we have already observed, all the boats of the Arab were away from her at that particular moment, and indeed with them the greater part of her crew. The disturbance at the castle gradually died away; the landscape seemed to dissolve into the slumber of night, and concluding that the confusion had only arisen from something connected with taking fresh stores on board, he dismissed it from his thoughts, or perhaps more properly speaking, another subject thrust it out of his mind.

The night wore on, he fretted and fumed: he could neither make up his mind what to do or what to leave undone, he began to repent having sent the letter and then he began to wonder what Clara thought of it, upon which subject his speculations were somewhat premature, inasmuch as the man to whom it was entrusted, having landed at Falconscrag in the midst of the excitement, had preferred seeing whatever was to be seen at his ease, and as we have already stated did not deliver it till comparatively late at night: he wondered what delayed the boats so long, and then hoped that something would delay them yet longer, and was beginning to think that if Lord de Creci did not weigh anchor at day break, he would in his own person be not altogether displeased,—when the sound of oars struck on his ear. He looked out and saw nothing, for his first careless glance was cast towards Falconscrag, and half smiling at the astonishment that simple circumstance caused, he turned his eyes in the direction of Somerton, whence the sound really proceeded, and soon became aware of the approaching boat, which he at first supposed contained Lord de Creci, but was somewhat puzzled at observing that there was no one sitting in it but the steersman; there were however, two stout rowers,—on came the boat, and in a few minutes was alongside the schooner.

“He’s going to sleep at Marsden’s,” thought Harry, concluding that this was a message from Lord de Creci; “he’s sending for his things; well, he cannot sail early in that case; I’m not so very sorry after all,”—and he silently took from the hands of one of the boatmen who had by this time mounted the side, a letter that the other as silently, though with a look of mingled significance and curiosity, gave him, and descended to the cabin to read it. But a strong emotion shook his frame, as he looked upon the direction; though it was sealed with Lord de Creci’s seal, it was not the Earl’s handwriting; well knew Harry those delicate characters, somewhat irregular, indeed, now, as if the hand that traced them had shaken under some uncontrollable agitation, and he trembled from head to foot as he opened it. But it contained no letter whatever, nothing but a piece of manuscript music: true the music was in Clara’s hand, but what business had it there; was it a parting gift,—a cruel gift, it seemed a mockery,—he opened the sheet and read the words,—and understood them.

Lento con espressione.

cre - - scen - - do.

En - treat me not to

leave - thee, or to re - turn from following af - ter thee : For

whi-ther thou go - est, I . . . will

go; and where thou lodg-est, I . . . will

lodge; En - treat me not to leave thee, or to re -

turn from following after thee; for whi - ther - thou

go-est, I will go; And where thou

lodgest, I will lodge.

Thy people shall be

my peo-ple, and thy God, my God;

f *ff* *f* *Ped.* *f*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a hymn by Harry Mowbray. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff with treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The piano part features complex chordal textures with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Dynamics include *f* (forte), *ff* (fortissimo), and *Ped.* (pedal). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score ends with a final *f* dynamic marking in the piano part.

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my

fz *fz* *fz*

God - Where thou di - est. I - - will

fz *p*

die, and there will I be bu - ri - ed; there will

cre - scen - do. *di - mi -*

più lento.

I be bu - ri - ed. nu - en - do.

p

Such were the contents of that singular missive, and no more.

It may, perhaps, be unnecessary, and would probably be impossible, to describe what our hero felt upon reading the simple scroll, it would certainly be impossible to do justice to his feelings; but what he did is a matter that admits of some faint effort at description, and what he did was, strange to say, at the moment—nothing—that is to say, he sat down—which cannot be called a very active occupation. He certainly understood the words, in so far that he understood the meaning; but their existence puzzled him, until he almost began to doubt his own, and still more to doubt whether he was really awake, and what was equally important, in his proper senses. On this latter subject he was not quite clear. The aspect of every thing about him seemed unearthly and unreal; the cabin, dimly lighted, and not over steady, seemed a floating hall of shadows, the lamp swung backwards and forwards with a ghostly gravity, as if of its own volition, the sound of the ship took an undertone of another world; the movements of the men on deck came with a spectral hollowness to his ears, and had the paper accidentally dropped under the table, he would probably have set down the matter as a delusion, and once more resigned himself to the bitter broodings of disappointment. The paper, however, did nothing of the sort; there it was in his hand, and what was still more, the writing upon it was in *her* hand, there could be no question, dispute, or doubt about it; it stared him inquiringly in the face, as much so as if RSVP were inscribed in the corner; he read it over once more, blushed to think that a year ago he did not know where those words came from; rather felt pleased that he did *now*,—considered how it came to be sealed with Lord de Creci's arms,—looked at the back of the paper to see if there was anything more,—and seeing nothing more decided that there was enough, which was strictly true; and mental depression having by this time carried his ebbing senses to low water mark, the tide turned, the flood came up pretty strong, sea breeze and spring tide, and in another instant he had hurried on deck, plunged into the boat that was tossing alongside, thought the considerate steward who flung his pilot coat after him an officious blockhead, and fixed his eyes upon the towers of Falconscrag, as if they were really worth having, now that he had something to put in them. He did not urge the rowers to give way, he was too much wrapped in his own thoughts to take much note of their rate of going; he felt that he was approaching the shore—on that shore Clara—and the reflection effaced all other thoughts from his mind.

The boat drove gallantly onwards through the water, the darkness of clouds closed gloomily round her, the spray dashed over her bows, and the following waves curled over her stern, sleet and drift came down in sharp angry squalls, foam was whirled aloft by vagrant puffs of the uncertain breeze as the seas were raised and shifted and alternately swelled and sunk under the troubled air, the hoarse booming of the surf came drearily along the waste of water from the shore, the sea birds hovered and darted and shrieked around as if questioning and denouncing the intruder, and the water she had already shipped, danced and rippled above the bottom of the little skiff with a cold cheer-

less splashing, as she sprung from wave to wave, trembling and quivering at every shock; the wind howled and the waves moaned, but our hero heeded them not, his heart was a different heart from that which beat sullenly in his breast a few short minutes before, and the fire-sides of merry England might have been searched to produce a living creature so perfectly happy as the single passenger that sat in that boat out there upon the waters,—and searched in vain. We carry something that is an overmatch for the external world,—if we would only give it fair play.

“Now lads, give way with a will,” cried the old steersman, with a grin on his weathen-beaten countenance that even the darkness of that dark night did not conceal; he was answered by a hearty cheer from the pullers; two or three convulsive tugs, a loud harsh grinding, down went the stern in the water, up went the head on the shingle, and the boat was beached.

A momentary balancing as he traversed the seats,—muttered good wishes as he rested on the proffered arms of the hardy seamen—an eager bound with the aid of the boat-hook—an impatient scramble through the heavy gravel—a pause of heart-beating at a lowly door—a dancing and shifting of bright figures before dazzled eyes,—and Harry Mowbray had received his bride from the hands of her father.

CHAPTER L.

BEHOLD now how the sun of joy broke through the gloom of that night,—happiness, that none had looked for at the sun-set, reigning uncontrolled at midnight, reigning as is its wont in dead silence, for earthly language belongs to the thoughts of the clay, and theirs soared higher.

* * * * *

It may now be necessary to explain the circumstances under which the early marriage of the Earl and Countess de Creci took place, and how they were after a very few years separated, and for this a few words will suffice. Our readers will probably be aware, some from reading, others from the recollection of the prevailing spirit of the literature of that day, that at the period when the power of France culminated, when the banded myriads that were never to return had already set their faces towards the Kremlin, the glittering bait that was to lure the King of the Bayonet to his destruction, when the beginning of the end had already set in, and that singular heaving and swelling of men's minds that had overspread Europe was subsiding, though not without leaving much unrest behind, and the craving for change had already yielded to the desire for freedom and peace,—a strong romantic feeling had worked itself into the minds of the nations, a feeling which, nearly allied to poetry, was not necessarily confined to poets, though its leadership was in the hands of the children of song. Some of its votaries ranging themselves with beating hearts and heated brains, under the banners waved by the wild and wondrous spectre princes of Southey; others worshipped the vivid creations of Moore, with a devotion whose warmth was more unquestionable than its purity; many bowed before the jewelled sceptre of Shelley, and many more were found, following with an affectionate devotion the kindly and chivalrous Scott; whilst Goethe, universal, permeating, and illuminating, had high followers among his own landsmen, and to not a few of all lands the morbid imaginings of Byron were as words of deep import, and spoken by no ordinary mortal; but to one and all alike the world, as the world went, was not good enough, there was a craving for something more, and many created a world for themselves, a bright and glittering edifice whose turrets were in the clouds, but its foundations, alas! on the sand, and over whose portals was written ROMANCE.

It was under the influence of such an impulse that Lord de Creci, then barely of age, a romantic, restless, and hot-headed young man, roamed along the shores of the Mediterranean, and for some reason that it would probably be now impossible to discover, chose to pursue his travels under a feigned name; and as Mr. Montague Marsden's observation with respect to the hereditary weakness of the family of Fitzwarine, on the subject of the battle of Hastings, was perfectly true, Lord de Creci thought fit to assume that name; and having, in the

guise of an unknown adventurer, won the heart of Clara Harley, was carrying his bride home in triumph, enjoying the most exquisite delight in the anticipation of her surprise when he should introduce her to the halls of his fathers, and she should find that the young stranger, to whom in its fulness, and the confidence of her heart, she had committed her destiny for weal or woe, was no mere adventurer ; but one who, in her own land, sat in a place little below that of princes, —when one unhappy night, the vessel in which they were returning to England ran foul of a French brig. The consequences of this misadventure to Lord de Creci have already been described in the twenty-sixth chapter, and need not be repeated here ; but his lady remained on board the Spanish vessel in a state bordering on distraction, having with her Clara, then an infant ; and during the gale the vessels separated, and of the fate of the French brig and her crew we are already aware.

When, however, the weather moderated, Mrs. Hastings persuaded the Spanish captain to return to the place where the collision took place, which was in fact in sight of the Barbary coast, though without much hope of hearing of him, for it was not even known to the Spaniards whether he had succeeded in getting on board the brig, but on arriving near the fatal spot, her worst fears were confirmed, the wreck of the brig was recognised, principally by the damage that had been done in the collision ; but the coast swarmed with the natives, it was dangerous to approach near, and a couple of boats, full of armed men, pulling off from the shore, left the Spaniard no alternative but to crowd all sail ; and sometime afterwards when she caused inquiries to be made about it, the only answer that she received was, that a French brig, corresponding to her description, had been wrecked at the time and place, she stated, a part of the coast in possession of one of the wildest and cruellest of all the wild tribes that had inhabited the north of Africa, and that the few of the crew that had come ashore alive had been butchered. She even succeeded, some months afterwards, in visiting the spot, and there a heap of bleaching bones confirmed the sad accounts ; and half broken hearted, she then proceeded to England, where the principal solace of her wounded spirit had been derived from the cherished task of bringing up the young Clara, the sole pledge of their love.

In the swarming realm of England, where all are engaged in a desperate pursuit after something or other, whatever that may be,—a coronet, a fox, a fortune, or a meal,—it can be easily understood how a lone widow with an infant daughter, living obscurely in a remote village, might escape notice as completely as if she had never been. Her very existence was unknown beyond the boundaries of Somerton ; and the unfortunate indulgence in a not very wise scheme of romance, probably borrowed from Lalla Rookh, which had impelled Lord de Creci to conceal his real name from his wife, was the cause of neither of them ever becoming aware that the other was in England, and of her having actually entered the house that was to become her own, without knowing it. The knowledge that she was the long-lost wife of Lord de Creci was the secret, which the shame of his having so long

concealed it, caused Sir Thomas Horton to defer imparting till the power of doing so had left him.

As for the Earl, upon his release from Algiers, he instantly commenced a rigorous search all round the shores of the Mediterranean, but with no better success. The thunder of Lord Exmouth's broadsides had hardly ceased to resound along those troubled and unsettled coasts ;—all traces of a frantic woman, seeking a dead or enslaved husband, had speedily vanished ; he could hear nothing about her, and he had at last returned to England, under the impression that she must have perished in the storm the night that they were separated by the accident that he had described to Harry, the morning that they were off Algiers.

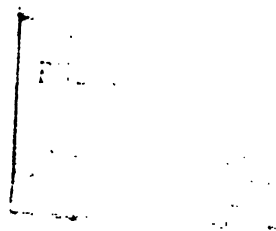
This erroneous idea, now of fifteen years' standing, would have been dispelled on the occasion of Mr. MacGillicuddy's visit, had he at the moment recognized the Egyptian sailor, who, it will be remembered, stood up in the boat, just as it pushed off from the schooner, and wanted to speak to him ; the man knew him, but unfortunately Lord de Creci did not, until after he had some time passed the straits of Gibraltar, remember that he had formed part of the crew of the vessel in which she had been left that night, and it was this sudden recollection flashing on his mind, that caused him to change his course so abruptly a short time before they fell in with the Albatross. All these things were now gone and fled, and the hideous dream of the past only made the bright visions of the future shine brighter by the contrast.

"It is strange," said Lady de Creci to the Earl, as they sat together, the next day, in the old-fashioned chamber at Falconsrag, to which they had moved for the time, "it is very singular, that during the whole of this year, shadows of you have seemed to float before my eyes. First of all, there was something that reminded me strongly of you, in that wretched Sir Thomas Horton ; then I was thunderstruck, one evening at Ellesmere, by the strong likeness that I observed to you in the countenance of Lady Madelaine, when she became excited—how I do long to see her again—and then, once more last night,—*the* last night of sorrow and widowhood,—the very instant before I saw you—whilst your foot was on the threshold—whilst your hand was on the lock—when in one moment more there was to be light where there was darkness,—even then I was tracing the features of one, who I little thought stood behind me, in the countenance of that poor murdered man. It is very strange."

"Blood relations all," returned Lord de Creci, gazing with a proud fondness upon his daughter, and tracing in her fair countenance the time-honoured traits of Fitzwarine, blended with the beauty of her mother : "Strong likenesses run through some families,—the Percies for instance, and in some degree the Howards too ; in Ireland it is very strong among the Fitzgeralds. Both Horton and Eversfield were near relations of ours, and of each other," continued he, with a slight shudder ; "blood relations of each other. May they find rest."

Reader, our task is well nigh done. Where is happiness on the earth to be found that can equal that enjoyed by those whose fortunes we





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Have here followed through sunshine and storm. Where are the words of the language of this world to be found, to describe the feelings of their hearts—feelings that may not be painted—that penetrated and absorbed their very existence; it is enough that we tell you, that in one window of that old castle, sat Lord de Creci and his newly-recovered wife,—in the other, our hero and his bride, all in the silence of perfect joy.

* * * * *

That the Countess de Creci, in the high place to which she found herself thus unexpectedly called, enjoyed the respect and admiration of all who came near her, it may probably be unnecessary to tell those who have seen the friendless widow in the humble station in which she was first introduced to the reader; nor need we describe the heartfelt joy with which both Lady Sarah and Lady Madelaine received a loved and valued friend, when their newly found niece returned to Ellesmere, not as a friendless and unknown governess, but as the Lady Clara Fitzwarine, accompanying her father to the halls of her ancestors. That Lady Madelaine had much to suffer is but too true. The shock, when she first heard of the events detailed in these latter chapters, threatened to deprive her of reason, though she was mercifully spared the knowledge of the full extent of her unhappy lover's guiltiness, for the hideous story of Lester never reached her ears. A deep shade of melancholy overspread her calm brow for long after, though no allusion to him ever passed her lips, for it was not in her nature to weary others with unavailing complaints, and as time rolled onward, its merciful progress left grief more and more behind it, and the shade faded by degrees away. For those who sorrow and are heavy laden, there is comfort, in a source that never ceases to pour forth living water, and where to seek it none knew better than the gentle and pious Madelaine.

The strong family likeness existing among all weddings renders it unnecessary that we should describe the assimilating process whereby our heroine, shortly after these events, was transmuted into Lady Clara Mowbray, nor can we truly wind up our tale with the orthodox nursery formula, that they lived happy to the end of their lives, seeing that the aforesaid lives are not ended yet; indeed the answer we received to the last inquiries, which—being desirous of presenting the public with the latest intelligence about a person in whom it must take much interest—we made, touching the health of Lady Clara, being couched in the significant phrase, 'her ladyship was as well as could be expected,' seemed to point at anything rather than the termination of life.

Her lord has collected a curious assortment of registers of births, deaths, and marriages, leases, deeds, old tombstones, and older parchments, whereof he is constructing that unintelligible edifice which passes with the Hereditary Wisdom for a claim to a dormant peerage, which he hopes soon to crown with the coronet of the ancient earldom of Falcontower, the only difficulty being that, owing to the destruction of a parish register, by some stragglers from the Prince of Orange's army, when he landed in Torbay, in 1688, he has never been able to obtain legal proof of the death of a gentleman who flourished in the time of Charles the First; and who, if alive, would be the true Earl of

Falcontower. We trust, however, that this obstacle will not be found insurmountable.

Mr. George Augustus Frederick Fitzgerald is now, as we have already stated, a patriot of distinguished note. He speedily gave up the idea of bestowing himself upon Mehemet Ali, being of opinion that the flesh-pots of Egypt were somewhat exhausted in their own country, and that something analogous to them might be found on the banks of the Shannon, as full of meat and drink as on the banks of the Nile. The situation of a stipendiary magistrate was the object of his ambition, but the untoward election of 1841 seems to have crushed that modest aspiration, at least for the present, and he has become one of the loudest clamourers for repale,—not because he is by any means enamoured with the beauties of a domestic legislature, or smitten with an Eirinolepsy, but for the same reason that actuates most of his fellow-clamourers of ‘Ireland for the Irish;’ viz. that if the country can be kept unsettled enough to shew that the Conservatives cannot carry on the government satisfactorily, the Whigs must try their hands at it again, in which case the patronage of the country will once more pass to the maws of his hungry followers, through the hands of Mr. Daniel O’Connell, which is plain English for the much bruited and little understood cry of ‘Hurrah for the Repale!’ On the fate of his friend, Mr. Cadwallader Fitzcrackenthorpe Macgillicuddy, some little obscurity rests. He stated, on his return to England, that having failed in an embassy to Abyssinia, sent to endeavour to persuade the king of that country to enter into a customs’ union with Egypt, he quitted the service of the Pacha, alleging that he could not do the work for the money, which was probably true, it not being the practice of that service to affect punctuality in its payments; and he returned to his native land to give it the advantage of his experience and enterprise in forwarding its rapidly advancing prosperity in 1835, when he was the author of a boldish project for running a railway from Dublin to a curious semi-fossilized village on the west coast of Ireland, supposed to be called Bally something, though it is not to be found in any of the maps, as a starting point for the American steamers. It was well intended; but owing to the shore, for some miles, being dry at half-flood, and also to the utter absence of any harbour, shelter, holding-ground, or fresh water, and the presence of a dense fog upwards of two hundred days in the year, and finally, the insulting refusal of the Saxon government to advance three millions of money to make it, the plan was laid aside. He then turned his attention towards draining Lough Neagh, the Bog of Allen, Lough Swilly, Lough Corrib, and two or three other damp spots, but he was constantly in advance of his age, and meeting the usual reward of such benefactors of the human race, has since disappeared from public life, unless there be some truth in the rumour that a man who sweeps the crossing where Regent Street intersects Oxford Street, and addresses passers-by in English-French, be what remains of the Croatian Grensefeldjaeger. It is possible; but the sweeper seems hardly tall enough.

The author has recently enjoyed the pleasure of passing some days at Chorley Hall. Her Ladyship is a shade darker, a size stouter, and

HARRY MOWBRAY.

having more weight to carry, mentally and physically,—perh quite so lively as she has been. Her employment, at the time arrival, was having all the children in the parish taught to sing fearful and wonderful method, much in vogue at present, which penses with ear, voice, melody, harmony, tune or time, but is said work well in the mass, like leaven in dough, producing an aggregat. taste for music among the lower classes, probably by some counter-irritant action. Perhaps the storm of sound is the music of the spheres. ‘*Vox populi, vox Dei*,’ is as old as the time of the Gracchi, and rather older. It struck us, however, as not precisely producing the desired effect. Lady Chorley, is of course, by this time, rather more matronly than in the days of her Psyche-hood; she is much attached to her family, and we observed her eyes—commonly bright enough—to brighten up still more when, after dinner, Young Hopeful, two girls, a parrot, monkey, and poodle, defiled into the room, and began eyeing the dessert. Both boy and girls seemed to us to answer faithfully to that description that they habitually give of themselves, in the nursery rhymes that answer the questions, ‘What are little boys made of?’ and ‘What are little girls made of?’ The parrot was of that aspect which makes one doubt whether it was not a mythological error that gave the owl to Minerva; it was a bird of infinite humour,—grave humour too, that is to say, much given to saying and doing things that nobody ever laughed at, imitating the drawing of a cork, the screeching of a grindstone, biting people’s heels, and the like. Indeed, he had not been long in the room before the fate of Achilles was brought vividly back to our recollection; and though it was pleasant to know that there was nothing new under the sun, it was not so to feel his beak well into our right heel; and we should probably have offended her Ladyship eternally, by some hasty expression, had not a diversion been effected in Poll’s favour, by the monkey, who at that moment pinned us by the left ear. Good, however, sometimes comes out of apparent evil. In consideration of his attack upon our heel, we were never once asked to scratch Poll’s head during our stay, and by virtue of our wounded ear, escaped an awful rubber of whist, which was otherwise inevitable, for Lord Chorley knew that we could take a part in that laborious recreation, and our customary plea that our education had been neglected in that particular, would have availed us nothing. He has become a great agriculturist, and proposes to reform the surface of the earth, and remodel the subsoil to the views of the Anti-corn law League. He has made some important experiments on the subject, converting his fields into laboratories, and his farm-yards into retorts, is about to establish a dispensary, on a Cyclopean scale, where prescriptions for all sorts of soils will be accurately compounded; he makes a strange confusion in the minds of his friends, by talking about lime plants and potash crops, silica, which, to make himself intelligible, he translates flint, in hay, and carbon which, on the same principle, he familiarises into charcoal in turnips, which appellatives derange their preconceived notions of the mineral and vegetable worlds sadly. He has raised an enormous crop of wheat off land hitherto considered valueless, at an expense of little more than seven-and-sixpence a bushel, and recently embarked

HARRY MOWBRAY.

ping transaction in the Pacific, to import some animals of the kind as a novelty in live stock, along with a cargo of the philosopher's stone of agricultural alchemy, Guano, as a tribute to the gods of his native land. It is true, that the odour of the guano killed the animals on the passage, and its heat burned up the crop that ought to have grown upon it; but that is only an exemplification of the maxim, 'c'est le premier pas qui coute,' it is to be hoped the next will be cheaper. He has also made promises to his tenants, 'de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis,' to teach them to farm and to lend them books; to find them sires for their herds and to grant them leases for their lands; to eradicate superfluous hares, to exterminate superabundant rabbits, and to work underground miracles by means of draining tiles. May his shadow never be less.

Most courteous reader our tale is told. May the patience with which you have accompanied us thus long, support you through the long dreary days of rain of the coming winter,—and so wishing you the compliments of the season, a merry Christmas, and a happy new year, we hereby bid you most heartily farewell.

Chas. Digby

THE END.

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